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Lord Brougham

Letter to the Margress of Lansdowne, K.  
on the Late Revolution in France.

3<sup>rd</sup> Edition.

pp. ix. 10

1848.

The Corner Shop: 1926.



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# LETTER

TO THE

MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE, K.G.

LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL,

ON THE

LATE REVOLUTION IN FRANCE,

BY

LORD BROUGHAM,

F.R.S., MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE.

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*THIRD EDITION.*

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LONDON:  
JAMES RIDGWAY, PICCADILLY.

1848.



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## P R E F A C E.

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IT is necessary to inform the reader of these pages, that they have never, in any part, been seen by the noble person to whom they are addressed. He was only made aware, some weeks ago, that they were partly written and would soon be printed. Therefore, neither he, nor indeed any one else but the author, is at all answerable for the views which they take, or the sentiments which they express.

There is, perhaps, little, if any, occasion to add, what there would be none at all to impress upon an attentive and candid reader, that they have been dictated by any feelings rather than those of disrespect, or of the least unkindness towards the French nation. Unfortunately many who speak of a book are neither candid nor attentive readers, and therefore it becomes necessary for the author not a few being no readers at all ; to state, which he, in all sincerity can, that, however strongly he may have expressed himself as to the dreadful scenes which have been enacted, first at Paris, and since in Germany, and in Sicily, (and to express himself as strongly as he and every honest man feels was his bounden duty), his reprobation

is confined exclusively to the very small number of the guilty ; while his respectful attachment to the French people at large, and his good will to the Italians and the Germans, will not suffer him for a moment to imagine that the people at large of those illustrious nations can do otherwise than partake of the same feelings to which he has given expression.

*Brougham, Sept. 29, 1848.*

## TO THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE.

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Brougham,  
20th Sept. 1848.

I THINK it a duty incumbent on one who has at various times been a leader in political movements, and had some hand in bringing about the greatest constitutional change that ever was effected without actual violence, to enter calmly but fully upon the consideration of the most extraordinary Revolution which ever altered the face of affairs in a civilized country.

You will at once perceive that I can only allude to the events of last February in France. It becomes all friends of human improvement, all advocates of constitutional government—in an especial manner, all supporters of popular rights, as you and I have ever been since about a half a century ago, we entered into public life, carefully to examine if there be throughout the whole of that singular drama, any thing in common with those proceedings which we have always recommended for the good of mankind—any thing in its course—from the plot to the catastrophe, probably now approaching, any act, or scene, or incident, or speech, or gesture, which

in the least resembles those things that have always had our approval, and called forth our applause. What men admire that they are prone to imitate; and the Revolution of 1848, in spite of the deplorable condition in which it has left France, has for plain reasons its admirers elsewhere. A sudden movement draws attention, an extensive one raises wonder; from being dazzled the step is short to being pleased; at least, they who are astonished are easily awe-stricken; the mere spectacle of extraordinary power successfully exerted, leaves a deep if not a lasting impression on the beholder. But all these things would not quite account for the general acceptance which this singular event seemed to receive abroad as well as at home. The instantaneous disappearance of "virtues, dominions, principedoms, powers," of all the men who by their station, or their capacity, or their habits of government, or even their habits of business, had a claim to rule the affairs of their country, was succeeded by the sudden lifting up to supreme power of men who, with the single exception of my illustrious friend M. Arago, were either wholly unknown before in any way, even to their very names, and existence; or who were known as authors of no great fame; or who were known as of so indifferent reputation that they had better have not been known at all; and M. Arago, the solitary exception to this actual or desirable obscurity, himself known in the world of science alone. So rapid an elevation of obscure men was calculated to strike

with wonder, but also to inspire with hope all the vast body of the discontented unknown—the men who alone aware of their own merits, are pining in the shade, and stricken with impatience to distinguish themselves any how, excepting by that slow process to which true merit always submits, which vain mediocrity ever scorns. Nor was even this all. Among the persons who had brought about the Revolution, and who had profited by its success, were an unprecedented proportion of literary men—not authors of works which gave them lettered renown—but editors and writers, newsmongers, and dealers in daily papers; a class of men well known for the influence which they exert, considerably above their merits, ample as those are—an influence in great measure derived from the constant repetition of their doctrines, their familiar acquaintance with the topics of the day, and their habit of partly falling in with the feelings of those they address, partly leading them, a habit necessary to the success of their trade. Hence it was observed that the Press (it is termed, as if there were no other, and sometimes the Public Press, as if a private one were constantly at work) generally speaking in Europe and America, but also in England itself, almost entirely joined the cause of the Revolution. Some few most creditable exceptions there were, but I speak of the common run of newspapers; and I can take upon me to affirm that this support, wholly unexpected at Paris, had a most powerful influence in

encouraging the small republican party, in silencing the voice of the country at large, and in striking with dismay the royalist party of whatever shade. I speak of my own knowledge, when I make this assertion; I add, also of my own knowledge, that nothing is more firmly believed by the illustrious exiles, than their having to thank the English newspapers for the sudden turn which some of their own journals took against them, and for the all but hopeless state in which the public opinion of France for the present lies prostrate as to their cause.

The influence of the Revolution has extended itself to other countries. Italy and Germany have felt it, and continue to feel it. They indeed, far more than ourselves, require to be warned against the contagion of that evil example. But it is France herself that having suffered most by it, stands most in need of the counsel which every sincere and enlightened friend must be disposed to give her, that after the existing anarchy shall have ended in a regular government, she should seriously revolve the past, laying it to heart, in order to obtain by her future conduct some security against that worst, that most capricious of tyrants, perpetual change, acting through the ministry of the Sovereign Populace.

I have, moreover, another reason for now taking up this subject. At the desire of our Useful Knowledge Society, and in constant communication with

our lamented friend and colleague, Althorp, I prepared a very elaborate work, the Political Philosophy,\* in which the principles of Government are fully explained, and the theory as well as the history and the practice of the various constitutions that have flourished in ancient or in modern times is minutely described. To changes more or less rapidly brought about every institution of human power or wisdom must always be liable; but so sudden a change as that which in a few hours has, without the very least preparation, destroyed an established Monarchy, and created off-hand a Republic in its stead, having no parallel in the history of nations, and being wholly at variance with every principle as well as all experience, I should feel bound to make the addition of a new head or chapter to the work of the Society, did I believe that things could last of their present fashion in France. Holding a contrary opinion, I wish to treat the late events as a passing scene, and to disencumber of them, and of their influence upon political principle, the Philosophy of Politics.

Such are the motives which have engaged me to undertake the present discussion, and to give you the trouble of reading this letter. I am sure that others too will weigh my observations; and whatever attempts may be made to stifle the truth, such as those which prevented the speeches I made on matters connected with France from being given to the public, suppressing them altogether in

\* The publication was begun 1840, finished 1846.



Paris, almost altogether in London, I have lived too long to have the least doubt that the eternally elastic and buoyant nature of truth will prevail, with a power increased by the pressure employed to keep it down.

It is no light matter, my friend, that you and I should have to discuss together a new revolution, after all we can so well remember of the former—the wars it occasioned, and the obstacles which it raised up in the way of all political improvement, sufficient for many years to arrest the whole progress of society. The party heats engendered, and the personal feuds, were among the least of its evils ; but the general sense of insecurity, with which it struck all the friends of existing institutions, was a mischief hardly to be compensated by the good which undeniably was ultimately gained, even by France herself, after the more dreadful effects of the great convulsion were no longer felt. Certainly when things had, at the close of the war, and upon the fall of Napoleon, resumed something of their ancient state, we might have hoped that with peace, security had returned. The French people, at first satiated with unparalleled victory, and then visited with almost equal reverse of fortune, only because they had set no bounds to the power of a chief who could set no bounds to his ambition, had acquired no foreign dominion, but they had gained a far more precious possession, a free constitution, in which the arbitrary power of a monarch could no longer make the law ; the pride of the aristocracy, with the influence of the hierar-

chy, were humbled in the dust; and every vestige of feudal abuse was utterly obliterated, even to the most harmless ornaments, and mere empty forms of the system. We had, therefore, some right to expect from the good sense of that ingenious and gallant nation, a fixed disposition to maintain quiet among themselves, and peace with their neighbours, while they enjoyed the ease and prosperity for which they had paid so heavy a price. The main ground of our uneasiness was the series of events which closed the war; two marches to Paris; that capital, the object of every Frenchman's adoration, twice taken by the Cossacks; an English General twice occupying the country; and ultimately an army of English and Russians, holding it in pawn for the payment of ransom, and the performance of conditions extorted by main force. No doubt it was most unfortunate both for France and for Europe that the final settlement could not be brought about without such extremities as these. A sting was left to vex; a wound skinned over, still festered, and rankled. Any people of high spirit, used to victory, old in renown, must have felt this deeply. How much more was it likely to irritate a nation so peculiarly sensitive, so universally and perpetually warlike as the French! The fear naturally was that this soreness, under what name soever it might be disguised, being ever felt, might one day goad them on to break the peace, not to make conquests, which every man of ordinary sense sees to be utterly hope-

less, but to wipe out, by some brilliant success, the stain fancied, and I will say, most erroneously fancied to rest upon their honour since 1814 or 1815, that temporary and accidental defeats, might be lost in the returning splendours of success. That these feelings—these, perhaps, natural feelings—should give rise to hostilities, not against any of the powers by which they had been beaten, but against the popular constitution which they had obtained as their only share of the trophies in the war, was about the last result which could have been expected from the untoward circumstances of the peace. It was as if we dreamt that the French might imitate some ill-conditioned brute of a husband, who comes home from being maltreated by those he cannot cope with, and revenges upon his unfortunate wife the blows he has received : And yet it is as certain as it is humiliating, to reflect upon it, that the real complaint against the Bourbons, is their having been brought back by the armies of the Allies, and the people seem to fancy, that by wreaking their vengeance on the constitution, instead of their neighbours, they are getting rid of the Bourbons as a symbol of defeat ! A suitor who had got an inadequate verdict in an action to vindicate his character, would not do a much more imprudent thing if he threw the damages into the fire, by way of making the slander be forgotten.

I must however frankly confess, that there were grave faults committed since the Restoration, and

even since the change in 1830. The Peerage for Life I reckon one ; and the allowing the National Guards to choose their officers another—both faults of the same description, as tending to weaken the Executive power, and undermine the Monarchical principle. I say both—because although the Peerage for Life seems at first sight to strengthen the Crown's influence in the Upper House, its ultimate effect must be to impair the dignity and lessen the weight of the aristocracy, and to deprive the Crown of a protection against the people, far more available than such an interposed body can ever be to the people against the Crown. The aristocracy of France from its poverty required every support. The infinite subdivision of land is if possible more fatal to a patrician order than to agricultural improvement, and the depriving it of hereditary tenure, so as to leave it wholly dependent on the Crown, converted the Chamber of Peers into a feeble reflection of the Monarch's own separate powers—a body of royal nominees, with little more personal weight than so many pensioners.

But it was a greater fault, and one in an opposite direction, to resist all attempts at improving the constitution of the popular assembly. The multitude of placemen who there had seats, gave an illegitimate influence to the Crown, and alienated the affections of the people from those who should have been trusted as their representatives. Still more the judicial functionaries who were allowed to canvass for votes in the very districts where by their

office they should only have distributed justice, and to sit in the Chamber as members, partaking of all the heats and of all the intrigues of the most factious times—both injured the character of the Lower House, and incalculably operated to corrupt the administration of the Law. Some change in these particulars was imperatively required; the exclusion of magistrates altogether from the Chamber of Deputies, and the restriction of the other placemen, especially those holding office during pleasure, seemed to be a change almost of course and absolutely necessary in the present day, when such glaring abuses can no longer find defenders among any class of the community. The very limited number of persons possessing the elective franchise was an equally important defect in the constitution. In all France there were not above 250,000 voters, not a fifth part of those in England, regard being had to the relative numbers of the inhabitants. It was earnestly urged upon the late Government by their real and zealous friends—of whom I certainly accounted myself one—that the franchise should be extended considerably. This and the exclusion of placemen to a certain degree, would have made the Government as popular as could reasonably be required. In pressing this upon my respected friends, whom since their loss of power I am the more proud so to name, because their extraordinary merits, their talents, their acquirements, their literary and professional fame, survive their fall, my opinion was backed, not merely by that of those

who agreed with us in our great measure of 1831 and 1832—but I verily believe as much supported by those who widely differed from us—men for whom I entertain a great respect—one of whom I revere, as all must ever do who feel grateful for his immortal services rendered to his country and to mankind. My belief was, and so I represented, that after experiencing the inevitable consequences of refusing all reform, and how much greater a change had resulted from the refusal, he would himself, if consulted, have given his opinion in favour of a moderate change in France, even by the experience of England. Of course I am speaking without the least authority, when I state such to be my belief; but I am speaking of one of the wisest, the most candid, the most magnanimous of men, and one upon whom no lesson of experience was ever thrown away.

I have left untouched, in this very brief and cursory enumeration of grievances, the master evil of all—the leaving unaltered that bad law which compels the perpetual and indefinite division, splitting, attenuation, crumbling down of all the land in the country—a law which has divided it into three or four millions of small patches, wholly unfit for any improved system of tillage, given constant occasion to insuperable difficulties in tracing titles, prevented anything like the formation of a landed interest, and deprived the constitution of an element absolutely necessary for the good

working of a mixed government. In favour of this bad system, the most powerful prejudices of the people are enlisted so universally, that it has been found impossible to entertain the discussion of any measure for modifying it ; and the affairs of 1830, instead of affording any relief, rendered matters worse, by depriving the Crown of all power to authorize entails (*majorats*).

Now these were the defects—I have not sought to disguise them—of the constitution which the French possessed as the fruits of their first revolution ; and no one can doubt that, notwithstanding these defects, it was a system of polity which secured to the country, in an ample measure, all the principal advantages of a popular government. But I will go further. Had these defects been removed, I am not at all convinced that the influence of the people would have gained materially by the change ; for if an extension of the franchise, and an exclusion of placemen from the Lower House, would have tended to restrain the power of the Crown, the increase of the Patrician power, by making the peerage hereditary, and by allowing land to be entailed, would have greatly secured the stability of the throne. But grant that the electoral system rested on too narrow a base—grant, too, that the Minister of the day could too effectually influence the majority of the Chambers—it must be admitted, that notwithstanding such defects, the great purpose of a popular

constitution was accomplished. The Sovereign could not stir without an effectual constraint upon all his motions—the law could not be violated by any minister, or any public functionary—the affairs of the nation were subjected to constant discussion in a public and independent assembly, responsible only to the country—the conduct of every person in the service of the State was liable to be examined, and his demerits not only exposed, but punished, by persons whom the voice of a considerable portion of the people commissioned to perform that duty. Compared with these virtues which the constitution undeniably possessed, all its vices shrink into nothing. Compared with the solid, practical good which it secured, all the further advantages which might have been desirable, were really hardly worth a struggle—assuredly worth no struggle that could endanger the first of all blessings, the country's peace.

But what course was taken? Instead of attempting to reform the system by lawful means, or to change the Ministers who had given offence, or to exact punishment by the course of justice for that offence, the indignation of the multitude in Paris suddenly bursts forth, because the police threaten to stop a dinner and a procession; an armed mob resists the authorities; an accident renews the conflict, after it had of itself died away; another accident occasions unnecessary shedding of blood; the populace, further exasperated, march to the National Assembly, and without the assent of any



regular body whatever, proclaims a Republic, of which no one had dreamt an hour before, and names as its chiefs some half-dozen men, of whom no one had dreamt at any time, as rulers of the State! Then this work of some half dozen artizans met in a printing-office, and leading on two or three thousand in a capital of one million souls, and a nation of five and thirty, is at once perceived to have the very probable consequence of uniting the ten or twelve thousand felons, chiefly discharged galley-slaves, who are always under the watch of the police, but always hovering about, ready for any mischief; a national alarm is excited, that the Monarchy having been destroyed in one contest, all Paris may be subjected in another to fire, pillage, massacre. So by universal consent, the inhabitants of that great capital submit to the absolute dominion of the dictators thus suddenly appointed by a handful of armed ruffians, headed by a shoemaker and a sub-editor, and adopt, as if it had been their own work, the new Government thus proclaimed by that most insignificant band, without even affecting to ask the consent of any human being, or even to apprise any one beforehand of what they intended to do—nay, very possibly without having five minutes before formed any precise intention at all.

Yes! yes! this is the truth—the terrible truth! The like of this never was before witnessed among men—I will not say men living in a state of civil society, but among any collection of rational beings,

connected by the slightest tie, and joined together for the common purposes of their joint defence, or their joint operations of any kind whatever. That a total change in their social condition should be the sudden work of a moment—a change prepared by no preceding plan—prompted by no felt inconvenience—announced by no complaint—that all which had before been adopted by the approval, more or less general of the nation, at any rate submitted to in peace by all, should be instantaneously renounced, rejected, cast off, and every vestige be swept away of what had existed with unusual acquiescence, and an entirely new order of things—an order in all particulars new, devised without the least deliberation, struck out at a heat, created off-hand as quick as a ready speaker can off-hand utter half a dozen sentences unpremeditated—that a few minutes by the clock should intervene between the old, obsolete, annihilated, and the span new, untried and even unthought of,—truly this is a convulsion to which no former revolution ever known in the world offers the least parallel. The possibility of the event makes all established government insecure,—shakes to its foundation all confidence in existing constitutions, but most of all in popular governments. The marvellous sight of such a change having been wrought by a handful of men in Paris, and tamely submitted to by all France, for ever destroys our confidence in any system of political power which may in that country be reared. How

solid soever its fabric may appear to the eye,—how broad and how deep soever its foundations,—reason and reflection will ever point to February 1848, and prevent any notion of real security from springing up in the mind. We may contemplate the seeming castle as we do the creatures of our dreamy fancy—Memory points to 1848, and we awake to see the vision no more.

It is not, perhaps, a very difficult matter, though it might serve little good purpose, to trace the real causes of this extraordinary, and to all the lovers of popular government, all the friends of the people, this lamentable event ; and nothing assuredly can be easier than to shew how entirely it differs in every one particular from all former changes in the political system of any country. To throw off the yoke of a despot, whose domination had become unbearable, even to get rid of the individual tyrant whose cruelty had rendered him execrable, or whose crimes had made him despicable in all men's eyes, even when little was actually suffered beyond the shame of submitting to such a ruler, *bellua quâ nulla vastior, nec sævior, neque diti, hominibusque magis invisâ*—has ever been deemed the right, nay, the duty of the people, and its fearless performance has justly made the leaders of their resistance be handed down to the remotest ages among the most illustrious benefactors of mankind. In such a calamitous state of things human nature revolts of itself ; the feelings of the heart take the lead and no process of reasoning

is required to point out the duty of resistance ; the fear of failure alone remains to be overcome ; and a continuance of the scourge puts that, with every whisper of prudence, to silence. In the far less pressing exigency produced by an established despotism, working regularly and without any gross abuse, men's minds require to be prepared for changing it, and it will always be a question of degree how far the movement to destroy such a system is justified. Certainly it never can be lawfully undertaken until after all means have been tried and have failed to bring about peaceably a mitigation of the evil, and even then never without a prospect of successful resistance. Where an absolute monarchy of another description exists—what may be termed European, as contra-distinguished from Asiatic,—a monarchy such as those which arose out of the Feudal system, and while they gave some security to the subject, conferred far too large a power upon the sovereign ; it becomes still more necessary fully to weigh against the evils endured, the risks of the change, and only to embrace this perilous alternative when the path to certain improvement is plain. The history of many despotic governments affords instances of the first kind of change—as the expulsion of the Pisistratidæ at Athens, and the Decemvirs at Rome ; the continual change in the Sovereign's person under the Roman Empire ; the frequent violence committed on the Czar in Russia, the Sultan in Turkey, and the Sofy in

Persia. Of the second class we have but few examples in modern times, and none so famous in ancient, as the expulsion of the Kings and foundation of the Commonwealth at Rome. But both these two cases assume that men's minds have been long turned to the contemplation of the grievances complained of, and to the discussion of the remedies; that a general agreement has been come to in favour of the alteration; and above all that the people are prepared by their lights and by their habits for the new order of things with which it is proposed to replace the old, when the movement is not confined to merely getting rid of the individual tyrant. A revolution in Turkey or in Russia, for the purpose of establishing a representative government would be a ridiculous as well as a pernicious operation. I take leave to question the wisdom of a similar movement in certain portions of Italy, and gravely doubt if the last experience of a Parliament in Sicily,\* which only served to cover its contrivers with confusion, offers any great encouragement to repeat the experiment now. Nor do I suppose any marked advance in civility and in the habits that humanize the people, can have been made since my lamented friend Lord W. Bentinck's time, when I find the inhabitants of Messina, within the last fortnight, actually guilty of atrocities exceeding in barbarity the orgies of the cannibals in the South Sea Islands.

\* "As soon (says a traveller in Sicily) as the President had proposed the subject for debate, and restored some degree of order

There is still a fourth kind of revolution justified by all sound principle, and of which auspicious examples may be found in plenty—when a Government, be it of a Prince, or of an Oligarchy, aye, or of a Commonwealth, is preparing to subvert the constitution ;—a Prince to render its popular frame despotic, a faction to make it oligarchical, a democracy to bring about mob tyranny, ending either in despotism or anarchy—the right is incontestable to take precautions against such attempts, to resist them, and, if need be, to change the persons of the rulers, or even, for better security, the form of the Government. Our Revolution of 1688, is one most remarkable example of such a movement ; that of France in 1830 is another. But all revolutions of this description, although they may be brought about without long previous suffering or preparation, are nevertheless nothing like a sudden movement. They only happen more suddenly than the other kinds I have mentioned, because the conspiracies

from the confusion of tongues that followed, a system of crimination and recrimination was invariably commenced by the several speakers, accompanied with such furious gesticulations and hideous contortions, such bitter taunts and personal invectives, that blows generally ensued. This was the signal for universal uproar, the President's voice was unheeded or unheard, the whole house arose ; partisans of different antagonists mingled in the fray, when the ground was literally seen covered with combatants, kicking, biting, scratching, and exhibiting all the evolutions and manœuvres of the old Pancratick contests."

*Hughes' Sicily and Greece.*

against the country and its constitution may not have been a long while contriving ; those conspiracies are the cause of the violent change.

The first French revolution belongs to the third of the classes which I have enumerated. A monarchy had, like all those which arose out of the Feudal system, been originally limited, as far as the Sovereign's power was concerned, by the influence, indeed by the direct and substantial power, of the territorial aristocracy, and had, for some part of its history, been also connected with popular institutions, by the custom that had grown up of assembling under the name of States General, a rude kind of representative body. It had become further improved by the establishment of Courts, not only exercising their proper judicial functions with great acceptance, but opposing also by a kind of encroachment, a real barrier to the existence of arbitrary power. This monarchy had thus bestowed considerable influence on the great body of the people, and been ultimately cast in a mould which excluded, generally speaking, all the more violent exertions of power, all mere caprices of rulers, securing a share, though an uncertain share, and by very clumsy, inartificial contrivances, to the public voice, in administering and even in making the laws. An able and fearless Minister had afterwards materially altered this constitution, by discontinuing the assembling of the States, and then the interference of the Parliament had been confined within narrow bounds.

Yet still considerable vestiges of a better system were in existence; many valuable improvements might have been built on that foundation. Meanwhile the progress of political knowledge, and the intercourse with their nearest neighbours, living under a free constitution, brought all the principles of government into discussion. Improvements were loudly demanded by speculative men, while they inculcated strenuously the doctrine of popular rights. The Court, however, far from meeting such demands with any concession, continued more lofty than ever in its assertion of prerogative. To public misconduct private was added; with the great error of not knowing when to yield gracefully and opportunely, was combined the fault of profligacy and contempt for decorum. The minds of men were prepared for some tokens of popular impatience, even before the fatal step was taken of aiding the British Colonies in their revolt against the parent State; and the derangement of the finances making it necessary to assemble the States General after an interval of a century and three-quarters, no observer of ordinary discernment could fail to perceive that a general revolution was at hand, and only to be averted or stayed in its approach by concessions which must change the whole face of the system. Those concessions were made; they came too late; and after a struggle of three years the Monarchy was wholly destroyed. To effect this subversion, then, three years were required, and three years of fierce revo-



lutionary struggle. After half a century of discussion, and three times as long a period of suffering under serious grievances, had prepared men to take part in these civil contentions—after so many warnings had been given in vain to the possessors of power,—after so many opportunities of escape had been neglected,—after patience on one side had been exhausted, and all the resources of misgovernment on the other had been exhausted too ; yet after all this time taken to prepare it, the Revolution was only effected by degrees, and by steps, under a continuance of the same systematic error as long as the struggle lasted, while the yet greater fault of uncertain councils and want of firmness, alternating with blind rashness, was added to the series of blunders in which the crisis had begun.

It would be difficult to imagine a more striking contrast than the late Revolution points to that which we have been briefly contemplating, and the whole comparison is decidedly against the more recent alteration, shewing it to have been without ground, without pretext, without one circumstance to justify or even to account for it, if we make a single exception, the familiarity with change, the proneness to violence, the habit of undergoing morbid convulsive movement instead of the healthy natural action of the politic body, a habit superinduced by the disasters of the times, and the use of powerful stimulants. But we are not now dealing with the topics of defence or extenuation ; we are

only viewing the singularity of the proceeding—that which distinguishes it so mightily from the revolution of 1789, and indeed from all other political changes, that we contrast it with the older event, almost as strongly as Mr. Burke did that revolution with our own of a century before.

A regular parliamentary opposition had been for years formed to the Ministers of the King, and it had been not only constantly defeated in the Chambers, but still further discomfited by the result of the general election, which considerably increased the majority. The principal ground of attack was the refusal to remove some of the defects which I have pointed out, especially the sitting of placemen in the Chamber of Deputies, and the too limited elective franchise. Those points had been urged before the dissolution, and they were taken up by persons out of doors, forming, in particular, the leading topics of the speakers at public meetings. When the new Chamber met, the intention was announced of renewing the same Reform discussions; and when it was found that so large a majority was returned for the Government, the usual tactics of popular parties were resorted to, the contest was transferred from the Chambers to the meetings, and a more than usual number of electioneering dinners took place, at all of which the favourite topics of the day were abundantly handled. Yet, neither in nor out of doors was any disposition shewn to assail the Government, excepting by the ordinary weapons

of party warfare ; no inflammatory matters were brought forward in order to excite violent animosity ; no very long list of grievances was paraded before the people to exasperate their discontent ; no such exaggeration was resorted to by any writer or speaker in any place, as representing the liberties of the country to be gone, or even to be in jeopardy ; no such extravagant position was ventilated as that the constitution in its existing state, the Government by the Charter, did not secure a great share of freedom to the subject, and impose material restraints upon the Sovereign. Far less did any one breathe a whisper of enmity to the dynasty ; indeed, generally speaking, there was little personal disrespect shewn towards the illustrious Prince, who, with extraordinary ability and complete success had, in times of foreign and domestic difficulty, steered the vessel of the State in safety and in peace during a period of above seventeen years, and whose private conduct was as unimpeachable as his capacity for affairs was renowned.

I have expressed my very decided opinion that the refusal of certain reforms was unwise ; that it was unhappy none can doubt. But other errors, I am bound to confess, were added to this ill-fated refusal ; errors calculated to strengthen the opposition in proportion as they injured the ministry ; but nothing more. The supporters of one party might take advantage of them, and regard them as singularly fortunate for themselves ; their adversaries

might struggle to palliate those faults, and their adherents might lament them ; that was all.

Among the chief of the errors, I certainly reckon the ill-advised appointment of M. Hebert to succeed M. Martin (du Nord) as Minister of Justice. This great department must ever exercise a large influence over the interests of the community, because it involves the most important of all interests, the pure and efficient execution of the law. M. Martin, independent of the unhappy errors which cast a shade over his latter days, or rather over his reputation—for I entirely disbelieve the calumnious exaggerations which were spread abroad—had given great and just dissatisfaction by his narrow though honest bigotry, by the bad measures he introduced, especially the wholly indefensible plan of the *Annonces Judiciares*, which armed the Government with an undue influence over the Press, in the provinces at least, and made the judges the instruments of exercising that influence.\* The promotion of a man so esteemed as M. Hebert for his talents as well as for his liberal principles, was hailed as a mighty improvement in the judicial department. But it was soon found that judgment and temper were wanting where those qualities are most required ;

\* Annually, by M. Martin's measure, for which however I must hold his colleagues also responsible, the Court in each judicial district awarded to one or more journals therein circulated, a right to publish all judicial advertisements, a large branch of business to a moderately sold paper.

and the course of the new minister, short as it proved, was one uninterrupted succession of unpardonable errors, from the day when he signalled his accession to power by dismissing one of the most able, learned, and incorruptible magistrates in France, the Procureur General of Aix, a man universally esteemed for his virtues, and who had made himself enemies only by his stern discountenance of election corruption in his neighbourhood, to the last act of folly and violence, the unsound opinion delivered upon the traffic in places, supported by a palpably misquoted decision, and the yet more astounding indiscretion of bringing forward from its resting place an old, dormant, obsolete decree of the Convention against public meetings. Certainly the fate of M. Guizot's ministry was sealed by the official proceedings of M. Hebert, even had no more violent catastrophe put a period to its existence.

The somewhat humble line of defence which the Ministers took on the question of place-selling generally, did them much harm. They did not deny the facts charged, but professed to think them justified by former practice, and promised to do so no more. Their predecessors very indignantly denied all knowledge of such proceedings in their time, and shewed themselves very eager to make this unqualified disclaimer. The awkward circumstance, too, of the precedent cited to shew that judicial decision warranted the sale of places, *viz.*, the case of a

tobacco-license, a thing always bought and sold notoriously, greatly increased the bad effect of the disclosure.

But the finishing blow was given to the Ministry's chance of weathering the storm, by the prohibition of a public banquet, that had been prepared with some parade, and was expected to attract a great concourse of guests. The ground of the prohibition made it worse, for it was the forgotten law of the Convention; an authority extremely ill-chosen, even had the decree ever been acted on, which it never was, either at the troublous time of its promulgation, or in the more tranquil seasons that succeeded.

I will go no further in enumerating the errors of the Ministry, and adverting to the successful use made of them by their opponents; because the yet more grievous blunder of first forbidding, then allowing, then again forbidding the assemblage, all within two or three days, belongs to the period of the crisis itself, which was so suddenly succeeded by the convulsion. But granting to the fullest extent the gravity of the errors committed by the Government, and the right of the Opposition to take every fair party advantage of them, no one can pretend to believe that there was in the whole affair more than the common play of political party, the ordinary conflict of faction, if you will, exasperated by somewhat more than the accustomed heat, and embittered by the defeat which the one set of men had sustained at the elections, by the pressure under which the

other was smarting from the increased hostility both of the press and the public meetings. It was a Ministerial crisis : it was a Parliamentary struggle of more than ordinary violence ; it was an obstinate and a rancorous fight for the defence and the capture of office—a contest in which power, and perhaps political character, were at stake ; but in nowise one in which the monarchy, *summa imperii*, was ever for one instant of time supposed to be in question. A change of ministry, total, perhaps sudden, possibly violent, as far as debates in Parliament, or resolutions of meetings went—a change in which threats of censure, and impeachment might be bandied about, and the accustomed decorum of the senate be occasionally violated ; all this was on the cards, and might have happened without surprising any one ; but nothing more. Any revolutionary movement was as much out of the question a few hours before the Monarchy ceased to exist, as it is at this moment in England ; as it ever had been in France from the month of July, 1830, or of July, 1815.

But these few hours completely changed the face of affairs. The mob, led by a few agitators, got the upper hand ; the National Guards, afraid of having their shops attacked, their windows and toys broken, declined to do their duty ; no sufficient number of troops was assembled, and these were ill distributed ; some hundreds of young men, eager to distinguish themselves, headed the multitude ; a

number of boys from schools took part in the fray ; a more powerful body of banditti, discharged from the galleys and the prisons, and always congregated in the capital from whencesoever they come, joined in the disorder which is so congenial to them, eager for the pillage which they surely foresaw ; the Abdication took place, the Regency was proposed and accepted both in the streets and in the Chamber of Deputies ; when all of a sudden an armed mob rushed in, overpowering the sentinels, terrifying the members, who fled in all directions ; and some one, apparently giving vent to the emotion that filled his bosom, exclaimed, like the woman in the German play, " A sudden thought strikes me ! Let us swear an eternal Republic ; and let us vow to live together under it." No sooner said than done ; the Monarchy is abolished ; the Republic installed ; and the mob instantly name eight Dictators, to rule with absolute power over the free Commonwealth, and, using the authority of the Sovereign People against their persons, to domineer over that people in their own name.

It is here I take my stand on behalf of all free States, all popular Constitutions. Of the defects in the former Government I say nothing ; of the offences charged upon its ministers not a word ; the merits of a Republic I pass entirely over ; it may for me be the most perfect form of polity that the wit of man can devise, and Monarchy may have all the sins that ever democrat charged on Royalty ; the



change of the old Government may have become expedient—even necessary; and the act which replaced it with a new one, may deserve all the praises that have been lavished upon its perpetrators,—nay, the absolute power held for three months by men without the shadow of a title to any authority at all, may have been wisely, mildly, ably exercised—of all this I stop not to inquire. My objection is to the manner in which the change was brought about—to the sudden, unpremeditated revolt, and as sudden unpremeditated displacing one system and establishing another,—to Revolutions made with the magic wand of an enchanter,—Monarchies destroyed at a blow,—Republics founded in a trice,—Constitutions made extempore — *improvised* — I must use a foreign word—we have none to express the thing—our sober English habits with difficulty allow us to utter a few sentences in this unpremeditated fashion; we have neither the wish nor the power to make anything but a speech off-hand, and hence are without the means of describing so fantastic an operation. But the phenomenon of its being, and now for the first time, exhibited to the incredulous wonder of mankind, is well fitted to employ our most serious thoughts, and I will fearlessly predict that sooner or later it will cause them most deeply to ponder over it, who have the deepest interest in its consequences, the French people themselves.

The inevitable result of this experiment is the

destruction of all confidence,—all sense of security in any existing Government. None can now be held safe for an hour. No appearance of stability can avail anything. No possession, however quiet, can secure the title; no surrounding calm can give the certainty that all is safe. However deep, however broad the foundations may be laid, a sudden blast of the popular gale may level the structure in the dust. Indeed, the insecurity which has now been proved the lot of all, is much more remarkable in Free than in Absolute Governments. In these a sudden rising may destroy the ruler, but there is little risk of the system being changed; in those the safeguards of the people may at a moment's notice be converted into the instrument of destroying both the present rulers and the scheme of polity over which they preside.

But above all there is an end of confidence in any Constitution which may be established in France. The lesson is now taught by the experience of February 1848, that to change its form of Government requires no long series of complaints,—no suffering from oppression, whether chronic or acute,—no indignation at abuses,—no combination of parties to effect a change,—no preparation for converting the opposition to a Ministry into a war with a dynasty. It is clearly ascertained that it only requires to change the whole face of the political horizon, that a banquet or a procession in Paris, or any other show should gather a crowd—that a few hundred men should desire to distinguish them-

selves in fight, or rather should have the vanity upon them of being praised for gaining street trophies where there were no battles; while one part of the mob chooses to have its ears tickled with applause for "sublime conduct," "heroic self-control," "splendid mercy," in the moment of triumph preceded by no victory; and another part wish to gratify the more substantial desire of wholesale plunder; and all take such delight in stage effect, in *spectacle*, in *coup de theatre*, that to gratify it there is no price in blood—in other's blood—which they would not cheerfully pay. Let but such men be seized with such a passion, and we see the consequence—it is the instantaneous destruction of the existing Government. For the sad experience of 1848 shews that nothing can resist them in their determination at all hazards to seek its gratification; and indeed it equally shews that hardly any resistance will be offered. The National Guards will think only of their shops and their brittle wares, and avoid acting, provided they see no risk of pillage following the outbreak; the bulk of the inhabitants will yield implicit obedience to save their lives; Paris will be conquered, and all France will take the law from Paris. Thus the agitators have only to let it be clearly known that the shops and their inhabitants are safe, and the day is their own, as soon as their warlike spirit is up and they are minded to have a fight and a Revolution; the show of a fight, the reality of a Revolution. This was understood in February; in June it was otherwise, and the plot failed.

A constitution which is manifestly in all men's eyes precarious, can never engage their love, because it never can inspire them with confidence. It is seen to be a building upon the sand, and our respect is only commanded by the structure founded upon a rock. The moral taste at once rejects mere symmetry and ornament; solidity alone is beauty in such works, and where there is ever varying aspect, the marks of solidity vanish. The contemplation is of a fabric that appears at one view, to have one form and colour, and when we avert our eyes and think of it no more, it has assumed a different shape and hue, or peradventure has been swept away by a puff of wind, and when we awake as it were from our reverie, not even the ruins are left, but another building has been raised to bewilder our imagination. Nay, it is worse with a political system that is ever changing; for we can form no definite idea, no distinct picture of it, to remember when it is gone; we can only mark the constant change that it is undergoing. It becomes a mere ideal abstraction, and men's affections never can be engaged by such things. Patriotism is engendered by the love and respect felt for real existence, for a constitution fixed and defined, not conditional and provisional. Men feel devotion to a real country not to an ever changing abstraction—what they know that they can love—what they distinctly apprehend, in that they feel an interest. What never abides long enough to be understood, but is ever flitting

before them, that they can care little about. When Mr. Burke unfolded the real meaning of what we call our country, and love as such ; when he described the desolation of England, its institutions destroyed, its society broken up, all its worthier inhabitants, the resources and the ornaments of the state, dispersed in exile, and the land left widowed and forlorn,—he justly asked if that was the country to which his affections could cling. But even the picture he then drew, represented an object far more capable of inspiring patriotic attachment than the ephemeral Republic of France now displays to her people ; for no man can pretend to tell what it is, none can apprehend its form and character ; or can even hazard any conjecture of its fate. All that is certain is its uncertainty—all they know about it is that they know nothing. To prevent general anarchy—universal confusion and bloodshed—a kind of tacit agreement has been come to, that whatever any persons may do who by any chance happen to be at any time in the possession of force of any description, shall be submitted to as long as they can preserve a shadow of peace—the name rather than the reality of that blessing. That a government so constituted should possess any real strength, or have any firm hold on the public mind—that a state thus administered, and existing as it were for the moment and by sufferance, should be regarded with the affectionate devotion which we call patriotism—is altogether out of the question.

It is equally impossible that men should care about the form which such a Government may assume, for all feel convinced that it can only be temporary. Their representatives may go through the farce of deliberating upon a new constitution ; who cares about the result of their debate ? Who gives himself the trouble to reflect whether a wise or a foolish system has been formed—whether knowledge, drawn from calm observation of other people's experience, from learned comparison of various schemes actually tried, or presumptuous ignorance, or vain, futile, visionary speculation, guides or inspires those who now profess to be engaged in by far the most difficult work that mortals can undertake—a work indeed hardly possible to be executed, because no man can foresee things that are afterwards to happen—and few men can even exercise full and accurate circumspection of those things that actually exist around them.

Such thoughts naturally occur to any one considering what is now going on in the National Assembly ; but who in France gives himself the trouble to consider those proceedings otherwise than as an uninterested spectator ? As we at a distance, and having little to do with it, look on and wonder at these constitution-makers, and note with amazement the hallucinations of clever men led astray by theories, and resolved to profit in no one particular, by the costly, but precious experience, or the instructive example of their neighbours ; so their own

countrymen, for whom, or it may be against whom, they are labouring, seem to look on as if the work doing were no concern of theirs, and feel no kind of interest in its progress. They gaze as on a stage-play, and care about as little for the result of this drama as for the catastrophe of that. They look as on the soap-bubbles which are blown out by children in their sport, and are to vanish immediately—not as on those which the philosopher forms, in order to teach him the properties of light, and the nature of colours. Indeed, some political lessons might be learnt from the blunders of these men; but the successful wisdom of others is far richer in the instruction which its happy results convey. Be that, however, as it may, the fact is incontestable, that the debates on the constitution excite no interest among the people for whom it is now framing. France has had so many within a few years—somewhere about ten, including one or two which fell still-born from the womb of the anarchy they were conceived in—that the eleventh could hope for little attention, even had its plan been sketched out in a less turbulent season. But coming as it does, after an *extempore* Revolution and subversion of Monarchy had made way for an *extempore* Republic, the most devoted friend to the present order of things cannot affect any concern about a form of government which, in all likelihood, will have the kind of permanence with the kind of merit which may be allowed to the

voluntary that a third-rate artist executes upon the organ.

It did not require the events of April, of May, and of June—the narrow escape from general revolt, obtained by an imposing military force in April—the still nearer danger of a total convulsion in May—the massacres of June, when, after an obstinate and doubtful conflict of several days, the Government was rescued from entire destruction, and the reign of general anarchy arrested in its approach—it did not require these first-fruits of the Revolution to teach us that its after produce must be the utter want of all confidence in whatever system should arise out of its consummation. But doubtless these lamentable scenes were well fitted to bring the truth home to the most unreflecting minds; well fitted to damp the most sanguine of Republican temperaments; well fitted to shew how fleeting must be all hopes of a calm succeeding the tempest of February; and to prove how brittle the structure of whatever might be raised on the ruins of the subverted constitution. Accordingly some, of eager minds, who had continued to hope against hope, and to flatter themselves with visions of returning peace after the fury of the mob's passions should subside, at once gave over all expectation of any regular, any stable arrangement being effected, after they saw what mere accidents saved the Provisional Government in April and May—after they saw its narrow escape from destruction in June, if, indeed,



it can be said to have escaped, when, though not destroyed by the savage multitude, with their felon allies from the hulks, it was entirely suspended—the persons who administered it degraded, and a military despotism erected, as the only means of saving the capital from fire and pillage, that city for which alone any interest seems to be felt in all these strange proceedings.

It is truly a most serious evil for any people to be placed in this position of entire indifference to the frame of the government which their representatives are engaged in devising ; and still more if, as is quite inevitable, the same indifference in good part extends to those representatives themselves. A new source of error, and a most fearful one, is added to the ordinary one of factious and personal feelings, always ready to bias those engaged in making the laws. The control of public opinion too long removed—for a public that is indifferent to what statesmen are doing is really no public at all—the disturbing force of those party and personal feelings becomes far more powerful. What can be expected from legislation carried on in such circumstances ? What, but that its results should betray its source, partaking of all the errors which party resolutions and selfish motives can produce ? What but that the constitution, when promulgated, should be found, in most parts, a crude, ill-digested, inconsistent scheme ; in others a scheme to consult individual interests rather than the general good—

a system in which the most obvious considerations are wholly overlooked, and the observer is left at a loss to determine whether its blunders of omission are more glaring than its sins of commission are flagrant?

But how careless soever the people may now, and very naturally, be of what is going on in the Assembly, it is necessary that some attention should be given to it by those who would help and serve that great and estimable people, in spite of their own indifference, by pressing upon their consideration, and that of those who, for the moment rule them, certain truths never to be lost sight of by those who would frame constitutions—truths which may be of some practical use after the tempest, that now rages, is lulled. It is of great importance, too, that other nations, who have followed the example of the late Revolution, should be urged to save themselves from falling victims to its consequences.

I have already said that the framing a constitution for a long settled, and densely peopled country, is a work which, well to execute, passes the powers of human genius. Even in the establishment of their new government, the Americans who had a nation of recent formation to deal with, and a people scattered over a boundless expanse of fertile land, did little more than change the names of their old constituted authorities. They had been used to a Governor in each province, with two Houses, on

the model of the mother country. They appointed a President, a Senate, a House of Representatives in each state, and the principal change which they effected was by the Federal Union, which again was administered by the same three powers, bearing the same names. So, when a century earlier, and at a time more favourable for trying political experiments, because in the infancy of the colonies, no less a man than Mr. Locke was employed to form a constitution for the Carolinas, and thought he might give a loose to his speculative views, a plan was struck out materially differing from any form of government then known, and founded upon purely theoretical principles. But it would not work, and after a trial of two years, was abandoned altogether.\*

In truth by far the most difficult tasks that man ever set to himself, are the making of a new Constitution, and a new Code of Laws, but the former by much the more difficult of the two, because if there be sufficient powers possessed by the ruler, obedience

\* Land was laid under strict entail by Articles XI and XVIII; four Chambers were appointed by Art. LXXVII, but only to decide whether any new law was an innovation on the constitution, and if so, to reject it; by Art. LXXI, all the four Chambers were to sit and vote together as one body. No innovation being allowed, no commenting or discussion of any law was permitted, Art. LXXX; and all laws were to expire of themselves every hundred years, by Art. LXXIX. There are numberless other extravagant and fantastical provisions in this, the very least valuable of all that great man's justly celebrated works.

to the laws can be, though difficultly, enforced, however imperfect these laws may be, whereas the working of an untried system of government has to encounter all the resistance of man's passions, and is disturbed by the friction of its several parts. The source of the difficulty however is the same in both cases, the having to work with human beings, and not with inert matter as the mechanist does. Add to which the impossibility of foreseeing future events, from the want of such fixed rules as govern the motions of matter, and enable the mechanical contriver to predict how far his arrangements are likely to succeed, providing for the removal of foreseen obstructions. Man has no faculty of foresight as to human conduct. He can see pretty clearly things passing around him; still more distinctly behind him things already past. In front of him, as to things future, his vision extends not at all. The more essentially necessary is it for him to examine carefully all that he has the faculty of observing, to profit by the experience of the past, and by the appearances of the present, in choosing his course for the future. Hence it may really be laid down as a maxim in the Philosophy of Politics, in the science of Government, that no system can be safely constructed all at once by human wisdom, but must be the result of experience, of repeated trials, and some failures, not of inventive combination, arrogantly hazarded, but of a tentative process modestly undertaken. Laws are made; Codes

and Constitutions grow. Those that grow have roots ; they bear, they ripen, they endure. Those that are fashioned are like painted sticks planted in the ground, as I have seen trees of liberty ; they strike no root, bear no fruit, and swiftly decay. Nature, indeed, as Bolingbroke says, beautifully translating a beautiful passage of Lord Bacon, “throws out altogether, and at once the whole system of every tree, and the rudiments of all its parts ; but she leaves the growth to time.”

“ Mulcent auræ, firmat sol, educat imber.”

Man must proceed by other degrees, and by adding part to part as he finds may suit his ends. Even in Architecture, I know not that I should prefer for comfort and convenience, to have a house built wholly new from the ground, though it might very possibly be beautiful to the eye, and certainly might be formed to humour any fancy I had to indulge. It is better for living in, to make additions and alterations in a house already built and inhabited, strike out a window here, block up one there, raise this wing a story, make a new range, where convenient add a portico or a colonnade, in short, meet the successively discovered wants by successive improvements ; and while you preserve as much symmetry as is consistent with the main use of a house, convenient habitation, keep the new parts in character with the old, but be not bound down by any inflexible rule, or antiquated prejudice, so as to

sacrifice ~~asc~~certained usefulness to mere love of uniformity or of antiquity. The experience of men is with me in this matter ; they generally find it the most prudent course to take ; they risk little, they profit much, they dwell in convenient lodgings, while less prudent men raise fine mansions which they don't much care to inhabit, and by the costliness of their plans, give rise to the saying, that "fools build houses for wise men to live in."

Thus my confidence is apt to be but moderate in any of the works constructed by the makers of constitutions. But of this I am morally certain, that they cannot too deeply ponder upon the experience of others before they set to work. The structure and the working of a good form of government in another country ought to be a subject of their constant and most careful consideration. How to profit by the example, imitating the arrangements that have in practice been found to answer, keeping what has proved on trial to be useful and needful, pruning away whatever has proved useless or noxious, should be their untiring study. Hence it is difficult to imagine a more grievous error than the French will commit if they fail to examine minutely the different parts of our popular Government, and to adopt those which have been found to work best with us. To despise our experience would be a great oversight ; but to turn away from the lessons which it teaches merely because it is ours, and because they are too proud or too prejudiced to borrow

from England, would be the very extreme of childish folly. As well might their physicians prefer letting their patients be killed or disfigured by the confluent small-pox, because vaccination was discovered by an Englishman. As well might the traveller prefer crawling at the pace of five miles an hour to flying at the rate of fifty, because Watt was an Englishman. We have a Parliamentary constitution which by slow degrees, has in the course of eight centuries, been improved so as to give us the inestimable blessing of a free government, with stability and order, a popular legislature, with a firm and efficient executive. Under this system, while liberty has been protected, the peace of the country has been preserved, and its prosperity increased to an unexampled pitch. Our position is in all respects the envy of every other nation in the world, with *perhaps* the exception of America; and I make the exception with something more than hesitation. In France I know that our happiness is the object of envy, and especially the happiness of possessing such a constitution. All the letters from Paris breathe this feeling, accompanied generally with prayers for our long continuing to be the example of free and stable government. Is it possible to conceive a more pitiable folly than theirs, who would shut their eyes to that goodly and solid structure, while they are engaged in raising one which may prove sufficient for the wants of the very people that are thus turning their looks of envy towards England? I speak of

their present feelings; for it is melancholy to think, and to them the retrospect must be mortifying, if not humiliating, how little cause they had to envy us, or any other neighbour, one short half year ago, when they enjoyed an ample portion of liberty, with that prime blessing, order, and the prospect, alas, how deceitful, of permanent security—were making rapid progress in all the departments of gainful industry—reaping the benefits of the richest variety of soil and climate which any nation was ever favoured with—and profiting by every improvement, whether in the arts, or in commerce, or in policy, which could be reached by the science and the skill of the most ingenious and most laborious people in the world !

But if it is certain that important lessons may be derived from our example by those who have engaged in the manufacture of constitutions, I must again and again dwell on the great truth that this is not the best way to profit by experience or observation. Gradual amendment, the result of mutual concessions between contending parties, is the sure and safe course to pursue; and the French threw away the chance of that when they submitted to a total and sudden change. Nothing can be more important than to keep this principle in view ; indeed it is the great lesson taught by the whole of the English Constitutional history ; and I do venture to address other nations, moved and shaken by the events in France, and some whom the visitation has not yet reached, imploring their best attention to



the most essential consideration that can be presented to men's minds when contemplating great political improvements.

It is a fundamental error in the theory of Mr. Bentham and his school, that there can be no mixed form of government, and they deride the notion of a constitution in which the different powers are balanced. They contend that if those powers are equal, the machine must stand still by the opposite action of its parts; and that if they are unequal, the stronger force overcoming the weaker must prevail, to the destruction of the balance. There cannot be a greater error or one arising from a more unpardonable inattention to obvious facts, a greater sacrifice of practical good sense to abstract theory and speculation. Indeed, it is the very fallacy of metaphor, which no one is in general more stern in reproving than Mr. Bentham himself, and our able, eloquent and excellent friend to whom he owes so much, Dumont. The whole force of the argument is borrowed from the wholly unlike case of mechanical contrivances, and the ordinary error of the school is committed in the transfer. It is forgotten that when political contrivances form the subject in consideration, not levers, wheels, pulleys, ropes, beams, but human beings are the component parts of our mechanism. Now nothing can be more certain than that the assumption is unfounded on which the whole of the Bentham reasoning proceeds—namely, that men entrusted with power

will never be content without exerting it to the uttermost; will never prefer a moderate exercise of it, unattended with vehement resistance, to an extreme exercise of it attended with the certainty of vehement resistance, and the risk of violent collisions;—whereas all experience shews that when there are counteracting agencies in a politic body, their mutual opposition oftentimes ends in a compromise, neither party obtaining all he desires, both succeeding to a more limited extent, and each partially gaining the object of his wishes. Mr. Bentham, in truth, gives all men the credit of being actuated by his own propensity, and falling into his habitual mistake of pushing every doctrine to its extreme, straining each principle till it cracks under him—thinking he has gained nothing if he has not got all—regarding the principle as utterly neglected which is not entirely adopted—holding that political philosophers are like men shooting at a mark, when, as an old Scotch king said, “a miss is as good as a mile,” or like desperate horse-racers turning away in hopeless disappointment if they have failed by half a neck, and refusing to be comforted by the worser plight of those who are distanced. But men do not so judge and so act in the affairs of life; still less in state affairs. They will be satisfied with less than they desire, and will compromise and make mutual concessions in order to avoid extremities. It is thus that with us bounds are set to the power of the Crown, when the executive desires the adoption of unpopular measures.

It is thus, above all, that when the Lords and the Commons differ, as you and I well remember was the case during the whole time we were ministers together, many bills are agreed to by the two Houses, to different parts of which each has many serious objections; because though each House has the absolute power and unquestioned right to throw out the measure it dislikes, yet both will rather be satisfied with less than it desires, yielding a little rather than urging on the extremity, which both always desire to avoid, of a collision between the two bodies. Thus it is, too, that even a minority, and no very numerous minority, in Parliament, can influence the course of Government, and modify the measures proposed—so that the Government, if we must follow Mr. Bentham in his dynamical illustrations, is like a body acted upon by two forces, not adverse, while he supposes them to be always antagonist, which takes not the direction of either, but moves in the diagonal, inclining more towards the more powerful impulse of the two.

Now this being the natural and safe action of political power,—only see how fatal the late sudden and violent Revolution has proved, and how injurious all such convulsive movements must ever prove! By degrees the defects in the French Constitution would have been felt so generally that the public voice would have required their removal. The exclusion, for example, of all placemen being called for by one party, the other would have resisted any exclusion at all. But repeated discussion and the

exertion of the popular influence would have made it impossible to hold out long. A part of the people's wish would have been accomplished ; and though some placemen would have been allowed still to sit in the Chamber, others, above all, magistrates, would have been excluded, to the incalculable gain of both the political system and the administration of justice. So of the elective franchise. The wild scheme of Universal Suffrage, never would have been adopted, a scheme which no party, no class of reasoners, nay, I believe no rational man in France ever recommended before the tumult had involved all in confusion. Nor would as ample an extension of the electoral lists have been given as many might have deemed desirable and safe ; but in all likelihood the rational and important measure would soon have been carried, of giving votes to all who were liable to serve on juries, and of enfranchising without regard to property, the classes connected with science, letters, and the arts ; an extension most consonant in itself to the soundest principles, most fit to be adopted even by ourselves, and most desirable in France as tending to keep those important classes away from the vile trade of agitation. But these and other changes, well deserving the name and the praise of improvements, would have been the peaceful fruit of discussion, of deliberate consideration, of politic compromise ; they would have amended the system, not only exposing it to no risk, but increasing its stability ; they would have

given the structure a broader basis, a deeper foundation, as well as more commodious apartments ; all would have been more convenient, and also more solid. It is truly a mournful glance that one is compelled to cast at what might have been, contrasting it with what is.

But such as I have described is the safe and politic course of improvement, the only true reform of abuses in any country's institutions, and thus was our excellent constitution slowly formed. At first our great Barons, the landowners of the realm, few in number, of large possessions, of overgrown power, offered united opposition to the domination of the Sovereign, and thus afforded some protection to the people, who were indeed their own retainers, or the townsfolks living under the walls of their castles, and thus rather sharing the immunities of their lords than receiving any consideration for their own sakes. By degrees the towns and their trades increased in importance ; the smaller proprietors of land became also more numerous ; and the representatives of both classes were allowed to attend Parliament, rather at first in order to authorise the levy of taxes for the Sovereign's necessities, than with the view of conferring any privileges upon themselves. The elected members now began to sit in a chamber of their own, apart from the nobles and prelates ; they were allowed to choose their President, and the rule became established in law, though often broken through by the Crown,

that no tax could be imposed without their consent. The necessity of obtaining such supplies, however, increased, because the land revenue of the Prince could not keep pace with the growing expenditure of the Government, and because the feudal obligations to service only produced an insufficient force of precarious continuance. Foreign wars rendered more taxes necessary, and in order to obtain them, privileges were allowed to the Commons. Defeats abroad sometimes reduced the Sovereign to make more concessions at home ; though victories as frequently enabled him to neglect the wishes, and violate the privileges, of the Parliament. But it gradually became a principle, that no ordinance could have the force of law, to which King, Lords, and Commons, had not assented. The accession of a family to the throne by mere usurpation, without any title, reduced the Sovereign during three reigns to entire dependence on the other two estates. A disputed succession gave rise during another half century to contests, in which the nobility took an eager part, and were almost extirpated ; and this lowered the aristocratic power, emancipating the Crown from the remaining shackles of the Feudal monarchy, without benefiting the people, or adding to their security against royal oppression. Nevertheless, in the course of the next century, the importance of the Parliament so far increased, that the Sovereign found it expedient to acquire influence over its members by the exercise, sometimes

of threats, sometimes of patronage. The diffusion of knowledge, and the progress of civilization, gave the Parliament authority over the people, and this increased the Sovereign's desire to stand well with that body. The principles of a free government came now to be fully and generally acknowledged, and the right of the people to enjoy its protection was first asserted, then recognised by law. Disputes having arisen between the Sovereign and the Parliament, in consequence of his pretending to exercise arbitrary powers, a rebellion ensued, and a change of the constitution was effected after a struggle of several years. The disgust occasioned by the new rulers led to a reinstatement of the old hereditary family, without any security being obtained against abuse, or against the arbitrary exercise of power ; so that not the least change in the government was left after the Restoration ; all things remained exactly as they had stood before the rebellion. Some years later, an attempt to violate the constitution in Church and State led to the expulsion of the restored family, but no change was made in the form of the government ; its principles were only more distinctly declared, and the Crown was given to the next branch of the family that happened to profess the religion of the State.

Many improvements were afterwards from time to time effected in the mode of conducting public business, some few in the constitution, particularly in the judicial department ; and no attempt being

now even thought of to rule otherwise than by the Parliament's assent, the chief abuse consisted in the large influence acquired by the Crown over its deliberations, from the increasing amount of patronage, the number of placemen sitting in it, and the aristocratic power over its deliberations, derived from the property in seats. Some remedies were provided for these evils, but apparently inadequate to meet the mischief complained of; till all compromise with the reformers having been very unwisely refused for fifty years, by those who took alarm at the prospect of any change, our Government some sixteen years ago succeeded in carrying a very extensive measure of amendment, but a measure in which many traces are discernible of the parties being unwilling to think of extremities, and so disposed to compromise regarding a portion of the matters in dispute. Indeed, our carrying the measure at all was itself a compromise, the Crown and the majority of the Peers having given way to the minority of that House and the majority of the Commons, in order to avoid a collision between the popular and patrician branches of the constitution. An improved system has been the result, and it has gone on working by constant compromise and mutual concession; the Crown and the Peers gaining their objects more frequently than the Commons, notwithstanding the success of the latter in 1832. The result, then, has demonstrated that the constitution was then improved, not shaken,



repaired, not changed; and in its amended form, with its vigour renewed, it has continued without for an instant undergoing the least risk of violent change.

Had the French plan been pursued in 1832, had matters been pushed to extremities, and the rude shock of a convulsive movement been given to all our institutions; two things would infallibly have happened; a more sweeping change of the Government would have been effected, a bad system being erected on the ruins of the good; and this new order of things, after doing incalculable mischief to the best interests of the country, would, in its turn, have been set aside for the old one, restored with all its abuses, and without any improvement whatever, probably with some defects which had long been eradicated, certainly with such a dread impressed on men's minds of any new convulsion, that for some generations no one would have ventured to speak of reform, and rulers might safely have indulged in the most irregular and oppressive measures. The Great Rebellion unquestionably produced a far more arbitrary government after the restoration of the Royal family than had preceded their expulsion; and the important security for the people, obtained by the Habeas Corpus Act, stands alone in the history of our liberties during the half century that elapsed between the Petition of Right and the Revolution. I sincerely hope that our neighbours may not find a far worse recompense

for their guilty and senseless conduct last February, as soon as the present military despotism shall have given place to something like a Republic, and that scheme shall have made way for a return to Royalty. The price of the late Saturnalia of Paris will, if exacted, unfortunately be paid, and heavily paid, in the liberties of France. But be this as it may, our own happy experience shews the wisdom of trying reform, and prudent, but not absolute concession, both in warding off immediate mischief, and in preventing an ultimate and disastrous counter-revolution. For it is certain that our taking an opposite course, and finding the Restoration I have been supposing, was as hurtful to freedom as the supposed Revolution had been to order, would have been very far from securing a tranquil administration of the restored Government. On the contrary, all the wounds skinned over, being left to fester, and those pains to rankle which found neither remedy nor vent, disorders would again have broken out, a new crisis would have brought on new convulsions, and the permanent destruction of the constitution, and of the country with it, would have ended the series of violent changes. I am anxious to impress upon the German statesmen, as well as the French, this lesson drawn from our Reform of 1832. The former are too apt to charge upon England all the dangers in which their own institutions are involved by the spirit of popular agitation, tracing it to our

example, and sometimes to our precepts. England, on the contrary, has never gained by such agitation, either abroad or at home ; and as for the example of our own improvements, to regard them as the cause of the jeopardy in which I fully admit the Governments of Germany have been thrown, is really to mistake the preventive for the malady—the thunder rod for the storm.

But I return to France ; and there they are now engaged—or, rather, some among them are engaged—in framing their Republican scheme. Let us, then, pause to consider, what their own experience and ours are well fitted to teach them on the fabrication of popular governments, since there is no hope of their pausing to consider how much that experience is adverse to the undertaking altogether, and how loudly it pronounces the attempt next to hopeless.

I hardly expect that they will themselves accompany us in this survey. They seem only able to consider with any interest personal questions, or party questions ; or if they deviate into more general views—social questions, as the language of the day terms them—that is, how the impossible problem may be solved by legislation, of finding profitable employment—that is, wages with moderate work—for the whole community, without any regard to the gains of capital, or the investment of capital, or, indeed, the existence of capital. Some of these economic doctors hold it the absolute right

of all men living in a Republic to have so much a day for their support—five francs for eight hours labour, according to the doctrine of M. Louis Blanc,\* who has shewn his confidence in his principles, and in the Republic that he helped to form in order to propagate them, by flying from his trial, and seeking shelter among us poor benighted creatures, slaves of a Monarchy (and who have hitherto resisted the attempts of his English disciples at organizing our labour), to avoid being judged by enlightened freemen for endeavouring to make his Republic more bloody than it has been since 1794, and the domination of the mob over the legislature more absolute than it was under the guidance of those famous political economists, Robespierre and St. Just. Others of these sages take a flight yet more bold, as if fearing to be thought drivellers like the former sect. The Proudhons of the day regard all property as a robbery, as something pillaged or purloined from the common stock which of natural right belongs to all; something pilfered for the benefit

\* See this laid down, not expounded, in the *Organization de Travail*, a work of which thousands were sold at what was called the very low price of a franc. I read it at the desire of a friend of the writer, and was bound in candour to tell him I thought it the dearest book I ever bought. Among other opinions, the deeply thinking author holds the very notion of literary property to be "*an impiety*"—as all men's ideas should belong to all—and he conceives it right that authors should have their works published by the State, and be rewarded, at the public expense, according to their several merits.

of the few at the cost of the many. This is a dogma pretty sure to find favour at first, because it goes to confiscate large possessions, and to let in the claims of those who have nothing. But as it also makes all division of the spoil impossible by proscribing appropriation as criminal, the theory does not seem destined to a long life. There are those, however, who having sense enough to perceive the wildness of such theories, yet must needs countenance some considerable portion of their fundamental principles—the rights of men as men, contradistinguished from their rights as labourers, the right to sustenance and employment, apart from the right to wages. These pretended statesmen are the more vehement Republicans, the Ledru-Rollins, and others of that class, who refer, not unnaturally, it must be confessed, to the pretences under which the late Revolution was accomplished, and tell us that the pledge was given, now expressly, now impliedly, to provide work for the people, and that this is the corner-stone of the new Republic. How such a pledge can be redeemed; how any Government can undertake to find work for all who want it; how, if workshops could be established, the line can be drawn between those who really earn their pay and those who only want their bread—no one has pretended to explain. Every one must, therefore, be aware, whatever some debaters may affect to believe, that the limit of the power to employ labour, whether the State or

individuals be the employers, must ever be the effective demand for the produce of that labour ; and that the number of men wanting employment in order to earn wages, and wages in order to buy bread, has no earthly connexion with the power of employing, paying, feeding—that in short there is all the difference in the world between the place suiting the man, and the man suiting the place.

Such, however, are the only discussions in which the National Assembly appears to have taken a deep interest. With the work of framing a constitution they have as yet troubled themselves but little, although their sittings have lasted well nigh six months, at the cost to the people of a pound a day to each of the 900 members. That work for which they were elected, it is to be supposed they will at length proceed with ; and they, but still more those who are watching their debates with any degree of interest, will do well to consider one or two positions of so obvious a truth, that they cannot be doubted, and yet of such cardinal importance that they cannot, without the utmost peril to the general good, be overlooked.

I place in the very front of the requisites, which all experience proves essential to a safe popular constitution, and still more necessary in a Republic than in a Monarchy, the securing, by the institution of two Chambers, both the mature deliberation of all legislative measures, and the due regard to the interests of the minority in the community. If the whole authority is lodged in a single Chamber, crude,

imperfect, and, it may be, absolutely pernicious measures will be adopted. The Assembly speaks the language of the people, and acts in the people's name. It does as it lists ; it is as impatient of delay as of controul ; and there are no bounds to the hurry in which the most important laws may be passed, or the most difficult questions be decided. In a single night the Constituent Assembly of 1789 abolished all feudal rights, all distinction of ranks, all church property, all municipal and provincial charters, by a single vote on each of these momentous questions—measures which it would have required months of assiduous labour to digest into safe, consistent, wholesome laws, admitting that all the objects in view had been both expedient and just.

Our own House of Lords has again and again prevented remediless mischief from being worked by the hasty, ill-considered bills sent up from the Commons in seasons of calm, when no general excitement disturbed the lawgiver's course. When you and I were in office together, I stopped three measures in as many weeks, measures which the Lower House had passed unanimously. One would have punished, by disfranchisement, a borough with 1300 voters, because a case of bribery had been proved against twenty or thirty, and the Counsel for the Bill admitted that he could not carry his case further : the Commons had collected a mass of hearsay rumours, which they sent us up as proof, and the moment we sifted it, all vanished away.—Another put in hazard every

borough in the kingdom, enabling the Commons to disfranchise, by a single vote, whatever constituency should be accused before it; and thus the Lords, prone enough to abolish the recently formed electoral bodies, would at once have been able to get rid of them.—The third Bill would have suspended the whole administration of Criminal Justice at Sessions. The first of these Bills I threw out, after trying the whole case by evidence, as I should have done sitting at Nisi Prius; I was assisted by the Chief Justice, and the Peer who had charge of it admitted that no other course could be taken than to reject it.—On the second, the Duke of Wellington agreed with me that it must not pass, although it was greatly for the benefit of his party; but when did any party view or other sinister consideration ever bias the mind of that great man in the truly patriotic discharge of his public duty? We worked together and changed the measure into one of a most excellent description, which the Lords unanimously adopted, but the other House refused, in consequence of the late period of the Session.—The third was rendered harmless by leaving out the objectionable provisions; but the Commons, offended at the alteration, postponed the Bill, and its benefits were lost to the country for a year. Had there been no Lords, it is not easy to conceive the mischief that would have been wrought to the reformed Parliament and to the administration of justice by these crude and hasty proceedings of the Lower House.



To protect against the tyranny of the majority, and to render the Government a common parent of the whole people, is another most important use of a second Chamber. No one in the representative body dares oppose those who assume to be the people, and clothe themselves with its sovereign attributes. Opposition passes for disaffection, and is frequently punished as such. Even out of doors in the country they who differ with the majority, seek their safety in silence and retirement. Hence the inestimable benefit is lost of compromise and mutual concession, which prevents extreme courses, and gives to the movement of the State a direction partly effected by the will of the lesser number, who, though the lesser number, may still have the right on their side. A second Chamber not only doubles the weight of the minority, but gives it courage and firmness to propound its opinions and express its wishes. It is also very possible that the second Chamber may, by its majority, agree with the minority in the first.

Partly from protecting the minority, partly from stopping rash legislation, a second Chamber is of further and inestimable value in preventing violent changes, not only in the jurisprudence and the policy of the State, but also in the frame of its government. In a word, it affords the best security against revolution, the best guarantee to the stability of the Constitution. Preventing hurried measures, it also gives parties, and the people at large, time to

cool and to reflect, and thus disarms of its worst vices the tyrant majority, ever rapid in its movements in proportion to its power, impatient of contradiction, from its habit of pampered indulgence, prone to domineer over the weak, given to change, because subject to gusts of fitful violence. The second Chamber, like every constitutional check, every obstacle to haste, every protection against tyranny, operates like a safety valve to the machine, and prevents explosion ; even where it fails to regulate the motion like a fly-wheel, or like that exquisite invention of our Watt's extraordinary genius, the Governor, by which he makes the centrifugal force of his engine, provides exactly in proportion to the danger, the instrument of safety. I say the second Chamber is a safety valve at the least, and when it is no more ; but it oftentimes performs also the office of the Governor.

But it is equally manifest that no benefit of any value can be derived from a second Chamber, unless it is differently constituted from the first. If it be returned by the same constituency, or nearly the same, no check whatever is provided to tyranny, hardly any security against mistake ; for it is only like adding a stage to those through which bills pass in the place where they are introduced. In America the Senate is chosen, not by those who elect the House of Representatives, but by the particular legislators of the different States. The Senators are for six years, a third going out every

two years ; the Representatives are all chosen every two years. The Senate is only between a fourth and a fifth part as numerous as the other House. Finally, the age of eligibility is thirty for a Senator, with nine years citizenship, twenty-five for a Representative, with one year's citizenship. It is manifest that this diversity affords some chance of both checking power and correcting error.

In the ancient Republics there were checks also, not only in the imperfect aristocracy of Rome but in the pure democracy of Athens. The Roman *comitia* had each a legislative power, at first by the people voting by centuries and by families (*comitia centuriata* and *curiata*)—then by centuries and by tribes, when the *tributa* succeeded to the power of the *curiata*. Afterwards the Senate's authority greatly increasing, that celebrated council had not only large administrative but considerable legislative powers, inasmuch that a learned legal antiquary has enumerated between twenty and thirty *Senatus-consulta*, which had the force of laws without any popular sanction, as he has cited many *Plebis-scita* made by the Tribes alone.\* Bodies thus having co-ordinate powers and privileges, operated as a check on each other, although the consent of each was not required to the decrees of the other. Mr. Hume has noted this singular anomaly in the Roman Government, and expressed surprise that such a machine should have worked at all ; clearly it could only be

\* P. Manutius de Legg. cap. v.

by mutual concession and compromise. But a further check was found in the absolute veto of the Tribunes, though this too was subject to checks from the superstitious regard for the soothsayers, and from the Senate's power of investing the executive, the Consuls, with dictatorial authority. And finally, the *Ælian* and *Fufian* Laws, by giving the power of adjournment to the soothsayers secured a delay, affording time for calm deliberation, and preventing not only errors but outrages upon the public tranquillity, insomuch that Cicero charges Clodius with having, by obtaining a repeal of those laws, swept away the bulwarks of the public peace.\*

But the history of the Athenian democracy is most instructive on this subject. That was the very purest commonwealth that human folly, jealousy of possessions and gifts, universal suffrage, and the kindred love of rash counsels and constant change ever called into a restless and turbulent existence. Unable to trust even themselves, the people chose the Senate by lot; its Presidents took their places by rotation; the occasional grand Council (*Heliaea*) before which were debated all the most important matters of Government was chosen by lot; on some of the graver matters 6000 made the quorum, as if to exclude all chance of patient and calm discussion; ten of the fifty judges (*Ephetae*) in cases of homicide, a large de-

\* In *Pison*. 4.

partment of crime in all Republics, were elected by the same blind chance ; no place whatever was held for more than a year, save a seat in the Areopagus ; many offices were conferred by lot ; and the general assemblies of the whole people (*ecclesiae*) exercised judicial as well as all other powers. In short, a more perfect democracy could hardly be conceived, certainly could never have had any continued existence. Well—The necessity of checks upon themselves, and safeguards against the consequences of their own rash, ill-considered proceedings, was so soon discovered in practice by the Athenian democrats, that the constitution provided them in a way not to be mistaken, either as to its origin or its tendency, the point it came from or the point it led to. It is clear, that by degrees the choice of the Senate by lot must have been modified by some arrangement excluding the lowest classes ; else the 1000 chosen who could only be reduced to 500 by the scrutiny (*docimasia*), rejecting disqualified persons never could have sufficed, and yet we know that each tribe returned only fifty with fifty supernumeraries in case of vacancies so made. Then the members of the Areopagus held and alone held their places for life, were in great part chosen from retired office bearers, and formed a General Court of Appellate jurisdiction. Next no new law could be propounded without a previous reference to the *Nomothetes*, a Committee of a tenth of the Senate. It must afterwards be published to the city by the *Prytanes* ; then

examined by 500 other *Nomothetes*; then discussed by the Senate at large, with an opposition expressly provided by five Syndics charged with defending the old law; and at length it was debated in the General Assembly or *Ecclesia*. But furthermore, no law inconsistent with any law already made, could be propounded without a direct and formal repeal of that existing law—an admirable rule for every legislature, and which in our own Parliament would be productive of great benefit. All laws affecting individuals, the most dangerous engines of democratic oppression, must be debated in an assembly of which 6000 were the quorum as I have already stated.

I ought also here to mention the celebrated law, *γραφη παρανομων* or impeachment for unconstitutional legislation, made to environ with extraordinary peril the path of the innovator—the provision by which, whoever proposed a new law was liable to impeachment if his proposition was inconsistent with the spirit of the constitution, and was even liable to be punished after it had passed, if within a year it was found to produce mischievous effects; so that reformers were made answerable for the future event or the consequences of their plans, albeit these might have been at the time adopted by the people with entire unanimity. I pass over also the ostracism, because it was a remedy of the same class, one full of injustice. Yet it was a great check upon popular leaders and popular violence. All these checks, both those of

the proper kind, and those, like the two last, pregnant with the means of oppression, were plainly resorted to with one and the same view, the prevention of the excess and the rashness to which all commonwealths are subject, or if introduced with other views, or by accident, were retained because their necessity had been found in practice. Nothing can more strikingly exemplify the inconveniences of pure democracy; nothing more clearly shew the shifts to which the authors or the advocates of such a scheme of polity are driven by woeful experience.

I venture respectfully but earnestly to solicit the attention of my friends and neighbours in France, also of our good allies the learned but zealous Germans, now falling into the track of the French example, to the moral which may be drawn from the Roman, but above all, from the Athenian story. They there see as perfect a democracy as can be formed by the wit of man, and by far the most complete that ever had any existence, established by a people the most sensitively jealous of all approach to control, the most abhorrent of privileged orders, the most steady in their resolution to part with none of their national rights, and the most tenacious of each individual's title to enjoy all the privileges, all the powers of government, as far as the condition of civil society will permit. And yet in this purely democratic commonwealth, it was found absolutely necessary, in order that the machinery of government should work at all, and the

state be saved from perpetual misrule, and perpetual convulsion, to provide checks upon the power of the assembled people in making their laws and administering their affairs. Some of these provisions were certainly introduced with this view; others may have proceeded from different views, and only accidentally served this important purpose. I care not how many belong to the latter description. Found beneficial, with this view they were for this purpose retained, as the contrivance of the idle boy to save himself the trouble of applying the stopper in the steam engine is made a part of the machine, because it answers that end, though originally designed to let the urchin rest or play.\*

All such checks, it is true, may not have sufficed to make the Athenian Government a wholesome or a respectable scheme of polity. On the contrary, we have a very severe censure passed upon it by one of its own most eminent writers, a pupil of Socrates, a practical statesman and able general, a lover of his country, but more a lover of truth. "These  
"folks," says Xenophon,† "can easily distinguish  
"good citizens from bad, and they like such as serve  
"their purpose, how worthless soever they may be,  
"hating public benefactors, as deeming their merit

\* The whole subject of the Roman and Athenian constitutions, with the grounds of the opinions which I have given on some of the more difficult points, is fully treated in the *Political Philosophy*, Part ii. chap. 10, 11, 12, 13.

† *De Rep. Ath.* cap. ii.



"rather hurtful than profitable with the multitude.  
 "Not that all this is to be blamed in the people them-  
 "selves ; every one has a right to pursue his own in-  
 "terest. But when you see any one not of the people  
 "rather choose to live in a state subject to popular  
 "dominion than in one where an oligarchy is estab-  
 "lished, you may rely on it that he does so from no  
 "good motive, but being determined to act amiss, he  
 "thinks he can better escape detection under a demo-  
 "cracy than an oligarchy."—Now I am far from  
 affirming that there are in France or in Germany,  
 should a Republic be there formed, the means of form-  
 ing a Second Chamber capable of affording the ad-  
 vantages which I have described, and which all must  
 admit to be so precious, of securing justice to the  
 minority, deliberation to the legislature, and stability  
 to the system. The want of a privileged class from  
 which a Senate deserving the name may be chosen,  
 and the inconsistency of a Senate chosen for life with  
 the spirit of Republican government, must greatly  
 lessen the benefits of the Second Chamber. But  
 this only shews in another way the evils of a Re-  
 public ; and inculcates the great lesson of all poli-  
 tical experience, that none of the pure forms of  
 government is desirable. Indeed, none of them  
 can, unless in countries very peculiarly circum-  
 stanced, have a long duration. They all carry in  
 their bosoms the seeds of destruction by violent  
 change, or of decay by degenerating into other forms  
 of polity. The people in a pure democracy, intoxi-  
 cated with power, are borne away into violent

courses that end in anarchy, which makes men seek for order and repose under a monarch; the patricians in a pure aristocracy domineer over the people, and confine the government to a few of their own body; the sovereign in a pure monarchy encroaches on the natural rights of his subjects, and erects a despotism on the ruins of a constitutional kingdom. But though thus it is, and though it be true that checks are insufficient long to save any of these systems, being makeshifts rather than solid securities, that is no reason for despising them or rejecting such benefits, how limited soever, as they offer—there being nothing more certain than that they are better than no security at all, and that they render it possible to hope for some protraction of the government's existence, which without any such checks would be wholly impossible.

2. The second principle which I would propose as quite essential for obtaining even a possibility of good government, and of a stable system, is that the legislative body, whether consisting of one or of two chambers, and in whatever way both or either may be composed, should be strictly confined to its proper functions of making the laws and superintending the administration both of the executive and of all other departments, but excluded from all share in any of those branches. The office of discussing legislative measures, or of controlling the conduct of public functionaries, may well be entrusted to a Senate, however constituted, as the imposition of

public burthens upon the community may not only with equal safety be placed in its hands, but ought almost exclusively to rest 'there. A representative body, necessarily numerous, because elected by a great people, can well and safely debate such matters; it is peculiarly fitted for their discussion. Such a body is wholly unfit to handle matters merely of an administrative kind, or of a judicial.

Its numbers at once pronounce this disqualification; its responsibility to constituents confirms the sentence; its want of individual responsibility precludes all appeal and all doubt. How can an assembly of six or seven hundred persons conduct foreign negotiations, decide questions of peace and war, or dispose of the national force, whether with a view to internal police or foreign operations offensive or defensive? How can such a body be entrusted with the appointment to places, civil or military, when each man will be quick to help his fellow member's job, and none ever feel afraid of constituents who can know little, and care less about such nominations? Above every thing, the judicial office must never be exercised by an assembly like this; and of all appointments from which it should be shut out, those connected with judicial powers fall most certainly under the rule of exclusion. To perform those functions, and to name the subordinate functionaries, an executive power vested either in one or in a small number of persons, is absolutely necessary. It seems needless to dwell upon this exigency; the experience of all nations,

and all times prove it. But I have already in an early part of these Reflexions, pointed out the necessity of excluding the magistrates of every country from seats in its representative assemblies. Placemen in general should be but sparingly admitted to such seats ; few, indeed, beyond the heads of the public departments, whose presence is always needful in order to explain and defend their official conduct, and whose best practical responsibility is that to which they are subjected by the necessity of giving explanations when required, and defending themselves when assailed. But whatever functionaries may be allowed seats, magistrates must be absolutely excluded. Their election and their sitting both injures the body they belong to, the Bench, and does disservice to the body into which they are introduced. But the irreparable injury which thence arises to the pure administration of justice is the strongest argument, and none can be stronger, against this combination of the representative with the judicial office.

I hardly think it necessary to illustrate by either arguments or examples this position respecting the confining of the Legislative Assembly to its proper office. A public clamour arises ; the Assembly is influenced by it, perhaps on the eve of meeting their constituents at a general election. The clamour is for war ; and into war the country is plunged, if the decision be left with the Chamber. True, the people have no accurate view of the country's resources, or of its probable

gain or loss by the declaration of hostilities ; far less have they any just knowledge of the matter in dispute with the foreigner, or of the manner in which the point may tell upon any interests immediate or remote. As for its bearing on the interests of Europe at large, of that they know nothing, for that they care nothing. Then true it also is, that their desire of war will be shortlived, and all belligerent ardour will ooze out of the popular body as soon as the unpleasing operation of the tax-gatherer makes the money ooze out of the pocket. Straightway the cry for peace will be louder and more general than was that for war ; but peace cannot be had without great national sacrifices, possibly without the risk of being invaded, wasted, even conquered. Suppose the National Assembly of France had, last May, been overpowered by the Paris mob, they would have done an act of as great madness, and as destructive to the country as ever was committed by any government ; they would have marched an army across the Rhine to declare Poland independent. Unprepared for this operation either in money or in men, they would have encountered a coalition of all the Continental powers ; and the sword thus drawn against the new Republic by the mob's invasion of Germany, never would have been sheathed until the aggressor had been well punished. France, unoffending France, would have been punished, that the Paris nuisance might be abated ; but in all likelihood a partition of the country would have been deemed necessary to pre-

vent a recurrence of the same aggression. Nor can I put this as a mere case supposed. The very thing happened, though with far less of insanity, on the part of the war-making multitude in 1792. The wretched Gironde party, by their own confession, urged on the Convention to declare war, in order to defeat their adversaries of the Mountain, who at that time were for peace, and in order to sink the Royalist party. The result was, not merely to establish the reign of terror in France, but to extend all over Europe a war, which ended in the conquest of France. The Convention has found in the Provisional Government copyists of its famous decree of November, 1792, and we have not yet seen the end of that vile imitation.—So much for a Legislative body encroaching on the province of the Executive. But how far it is adapted to the exercise of judicial functions, let the example of the Convention also teach ; for the Revolutionary Tribunal, which nominally judged the unhappy victims of the popular fury, was an instrument in the hands of the Convention, the real judge, as well as prosecutor of all the innocent men, whom the mob and mob-leaders of the day required to be offered up, that their thirst of blood might be slaked.

3. The great chapter of the Elective Franchise cannot be left untouched in this appeal to past experience, and it forms the third of my reflexions, respectfully and most amicably submitted to Germany and to France. I have freely confessed in the House

of Lords, that the result of the late French elections has not been altogether in accordance with what I had always apprehended would be the consequences of Universal Suffrage. A smaller, a very much smaller, proportion of the deputies returned has been taken from the inferior and the uneducated classes than could possibly have been expected, especially when such wages as a pound per day were held out to tempt labouring men from their ordinary occupations. It must, however, be observed that but a small proportion of respectable proprietors have been returned, and that a very great body of political adventurers has been chosen. We are also to recollect that this election was made for a particular purpose, for one occasion only. Those returned were to be dismissed as soon as the Republican Constitution should be framed. It by no means follows that the inferior classes may not turn their thoughts towards the trade of deputy, when repeated elections have brought the matter fully before them ; and when they perceive that a poor man once returned, is sure to gain by a couple of years attendance a much larger fortune than he could hope to realize by a long lifetime of daily labour.

Of one thing I am quite certain ; this experiment of Universal Suffrage, even were it to succeed on a full trial in a country like France, long accustomed to elective proceedings, never can be safely tried by the German States ; and it is most unwise in them to have begun their electoral course by

adopting it as their rule. ‘ They ought to recollect that it is quite new even in France. The most popular of all the assemblies, the one chosen by the most extended franchise, was the Convention of 1792; and the qualification for electing a member of the primary body, was the payment of about three shillings in direct taxes, indicating an income of forty shillings a year, while the members of that primary body, who really elected the deputies to the Convention, were to be such as paid eleven or twelve pounds, indicating an income of a hundred and fifty. This was indeed anything rather than Universal Suffrage; it was an extremely restricted franchise. The experiment of Universal Suffrage, then, in an old established country like France, has only been tried since last April. The Germans, in choosing their plan, had two examples before them; the Parliament of England, existing for eight centuries, and gradually improved, till it has been found, and is confessed by all reasonable men, to perform satisfactorily the functions of a popular representation; the Assembly of France, existing for not quite eight weeks, and of which no man can as yet venture to predict that it will be any thing but a complete failure. These being the two patterns laid before the Germans, they, or rather their speculative, visionary leaders for them, have without hesitation preferred the French, backed by an experience of eight weeks, to the English resting its claim to approval upon the experience of eight hundred years.



My alarm I confess to be great as to the consequences of this most ill-advised course. I regard Germany as in a position of more danger than France herself, from social convulsion, and all the worst evils of popular excess. She has had none of the experience of revolutions, which in France has habituated all orders of the people to lead a life of change ; her multitudes are not accustomed to the dreadful excitement in which the French have lived ; the first fit may overpower the constitution, and produce terrible disorders. The leaders have no experience whatever of popular government, and all the institutions of the State are formed upon a plan which it would require great skill, with much temperate discretion, to fit for the novelties that the agitators seem resolved to introduce. Above all, there is the generally prevalent intoxication which a great change is sure to create ; and the fantastic tricks which boys play under such an untried influence, and only to excite merriment, are apt to be frightful and destructive when strong men are submitted to the inspiration which, for the first time, suspends reason and lets loose brute force. Nor can I shut my eyes to the peculiarities of national character which distinguish the Germans. In many important particulars most estimable, in honesty, industry, kindliness of nature they are not surpassed. Yet with this is combined an exaltation of fancy, near akin no doubt to that brilliant genius of which it is the exaggeration, but very apt to lay snares

for the judgment and impair if not subdue the reasoning powers. The excellent and persevering German is, accordingly, often observed to be of a bewildered intellect, the slave of fantastic theory, prone to visionary belief, nay, with all his good nature, apt to engage in odd, unintelligible brawls ; insomuch that we speak of a German quarrel as something known in Germany more than in other countries, while a German speculation is conceived to be something romantic, and a German romance something wild. Even their kindly dispositions I should little trust, if the popular excitement, working upon the theatrical, visionary, unearthly imagination, should once drive them beyond the bounds of sober demeanour. The Parisian or Sicilian mob may be naturally more ferocious, the German populace more ridiculous, yet, where sound reason is wanting, who shall tell to what excesses the vagaries of the disturbed brain may lead ? *Corruptio optimi pessima* ; and I own I have my fears of a German mob, and its *ideologue* leaders.\*

I must remember, too, in comparing the two countries, and it is no little part of my fear, that there is wanting in Germany the recollection of former sufferings from the reign of anarchy and blood, a recollection which in France is ever uppermost, which has

\* This page was written on the 25th of September, and on the next day arrived the horrid accounts from Frankfort to confirm my worst fears.

been so even during the late excesses, and which indeed alone seems to have set bounds to them. The bulk of the Parisians at first shewed indifference to the violence of the comparatively few agitators. But when the dread of a Red Republic began to haunt them, even the National Guard, passive in February, was ready to act in June, and the voices which at one moment had seemed to lift M. Lamartine above all his rivals, left him, with a singular accord, as soon as he formed his most inconceivable, or most suspicious junction with the party that panted for the guillotine as an instrument of government, and the assignats as a resource of finance. This interval of popular firmness and good sense, in so long a course of feebleness and folly, was altogether the effect of those dreadful recollections which are engraven on men's minds ever since 1794, which they who had passed through that tremendous crisis, and have now followed its victims, described without ceasing to their children that yet survive; and of which some still live to tell the story with far more impression than any tradition can make. In Germany this corrective, or preventive is wanting; neither tradition nor memory affords it there.

The want of experience in popular Government has, no doubt, already shewn itself, partly in the Chambers which have been elected, partly in the electors themselves. I will only mention the Austrian and Prussian, though the recent proceedings at Frankfort are little calculated to allay

our apprehensions. I have seen a curious page of statistics in the hands of some German friends; who must be well informed on a subject that interests them so nearly. It was an account of the elections for some of the provinces that send members to the Vienna Assembly. Universal Suffrage, untried Universal Suffrage, was the canon of election; and its results were so different from those which it had produced in France, that one could not avoid being deeply struck with the danger of transferring any political institution from country to country, and the mischiefs occasioned by want of political experience, in the conduct of public affairs. Of about three hundred deputies chosen, not half a dozen were what we should call gentlemen, in condition and in education. Many of the peasants elected were proprietors to a small extent, an inferior kind of yeomanry. There was a column for the members that could read and write; it was but indifferently filled; the column of mere readers was better supplied with figures; of the wholly ignorant there was a fair proportion, almost enough to have satisfied my misguided and worthy friend, the late Minister of Public Instruction, in his zeal against education, considered as an accomplishment of law-givers. The peasants are represented to be men tolerably well informed for their station, and on subjects connected with their calling and rank in life, but whose ideas reach no higher than the parish steeple, or further than the bounds of that

bumble district. But how, saith the wise man, "how can he get wisdom that holdeth the plough, "and that glorieth in the goad ; that driveth oxen ; "and is occupied in their labours ; and whose talk "is of bullocks."—Yet to such men so appointed is committed the greatest of tasks on which mortal man can be employed, not the holding of the plough, but of the lawgiver's pen ; and their talk is to be not of bullocks, but of the highest matters that can occupy the human mind, the forming of a constitution ! That this talk would be strange to those simple beings were they able to communicate with one another is certain ; but how will it be now, when being assembled in the same place they are found not to speak in the same tongue—when at least eighty out of three hundred present use the Slavonian, which no German understands, and are unable to comprehend a word of the Saxon which alone the German speaks ? Yet so it is, and such is the result of Universal Suffrage transplanted to the Austrian dominions, which unlike France, knew nothing of any suffrage before.

At Berlin a somewhat similar Chamber has been collected by a similar but less extended right of voting ; I find the following to be the enumeration, which I have from a source of the highest credit. Of the 400 members, 60 are of classes fit to choose representatives, considerable land-owners, dignified and beneficed clergy, judges of supreme courts, merchants and manufacturers of note, men

of letters, lawyers of reputation; these 60 form an important but a small body. No less than 260 are petty lawyers and attorneys, inferior judges or rather justices, curates, subordinate teachers, small tradesmen and manufacturers. About 80 are common day-labourers. There may be nearly the same number of men who have some property, and as many who can write but very indifferently, being persons of no education.—I am little surprised, and less edified, to have from the same high authority an account which leaves little doubt how large a part faction and the spirit of political adventure is likely to play in this Prussian Constituent Assembly. There is a Conservative body or *droite* of about 130; a Republican or *gauche* of 110; a Moderate or *centre* of 100. These sections are marshalled under leaders eager to play the most unprincipled and selfish game of faction, with all its headlong violence, all its profligate jobbing, all its unscrupulous intrigue. Not more than 60 of the whole are persons of no party, and who may be appealed to on behalf of the public interests with any chance of the appeal being heard. Here again, we see the effects of a novel state of political existence. In no established government could men be so marshalled, at least, never in any thing like the same proportions. It may safely be affirmed, that to carry on any administration in such a state of the governing body, without any thing like a majority attached to one principle

more than another, is politically if not morally impossible.

No one who values and respects the German nation, as all Englishmen habitually do, can fail to mourn over this state of things, and to shudder at contemplating the dismal prospect before him. That the restoration of calm should be the work of reflexion, and arise from superior wisdom, founded on experience, guiding the mass of the community, however earnestly to be desired, is, I fear, hardly to be hoped. That some sad outbreak, and the horrors attending it, should, as it were, shake the people into their sober senses, awakening them from their present intoxicated state, and should disarm their wild, or wicked leaders of the power they already shew such a disposition to abuse, is, perhaps, all we can reasonably expect ; and though the price paid for the return of reason may be severe, the acquisition will be well worth the payment.

4. I fear, my dear friend, you may deem me somewhat didactic, if not dogmatical, if I go on to lay down other general principles of government for France and Germany ; therefore I will hasten to conclude with the most important of them all, that which should never for a moment be lost sight of by the makers of constitutions, and which I have at each successive stage of my preceding reflexions found it difficult not to introduce by anticipation — so intimate, so indissoluble is its connexion with all the parts of the subject—I mean

the principle, if so obvious a truth requires to be dignified with such a title, that an Executive Power must be provided, not only for performing those functions of administration which are carefully excluded from the cognizance of the legislature, but still more for the conservation of domestic order and peace.

I am quite aware that I shall have a very ready assent from the constitution-mongers themselves when I lay down the necessity of an Executive. All of them will be for having a something of the kind, Directory, or Consuls, or President; in short, some political chief for their Republic. None of them would choose to leave the scramble for place—towards which so many longing eyes are turned—to the members of the Assembly at large; none would deprive himself or his party of the chance of power held out by the exaltation of a high functionary to represent the State. A chief they will have; but it is quite another matter with what authority they will consent to have him clothed; and you may be well assured that, as soon as the alarm excited by the events of May and June has passed away, the alarm on which alone the Military Dictatorship is founded, the Assembly will struggle pretty violently against arming any Executive whatever with large powers. Now I hold it to be of the very first importance, nay of absolute necessity, to the stability of the Government, and the prevention of anarchy, that the Chief, by whatever name he is to be known, should



possess power so efficacious as may arm him with the means of suppressing all insurrection. With this view he must have at his entire disposal, subject only to rendering an account of his conduct, a military force sufficient to put down, in an instant, on the call of the occasion, any attempt at revolt. How far he should be made answerable in his own person, and during his continuance in office, is another and a most difficult question. If he can any day be summoned before a popular Assembly, to explain and defend his proceedings, plainly he is not in any intelligible, at least in any rational sense, an Executive Chief; and his action will be so crippled, that his appointment can afford no security to the public peace. The Assembly, not he, will be in reality ruler. On the other hand, if he is only to be amenable after his office expires, there is a great danger of abuse, and even of usurpation upon the constitution. Then, again, if his ministers are to be answerable, and not himself, the same evils arise: the Executive is crippled, and the Assembly administers as well as governs or superintends. Perhaps the making the Chief annually answerable, and always at the end of his office, and continuing him in office three years, and amenable for anything done or omitted above a year before the charge brought, might afford some solution of this question, the difficulty of which I have freely admitted.

But the cardinal point here is never to be lost sight of. An Executive is necessary, but a real,

vigorous, effective Executive; one deserving the name, lifted up above the people, not for empty ornament of the political structure, not to complete its form that the symmetry may please the eye, but to consolidate its strength, to give it consistency, and to bind its parts together; above all, to make it resist external force, like the key-stone of the arch, which, though it may finish the curve, is not there for any such trivial purpose, but to the end that the fabric being made perfect in all its parts by that higher and commanding portion, the pressure from without, may not only be harmless, but produce a resistance proportioned to the demand for it. That the Executive may have its due form—may deserve its name—there must be secured to it such independence as shall inspire it with firmness to decide, and such force placed at its disposal, its absolute disposal, as shall arm it with power to act. It must be in very deed the terror of evil doers; but it can only be so if enabled to cope with, and overpower on the instant, all resistance. Wholly unawed by the populace, bearing only respect to the people, in order to protect the people from their worst enemy, the populace, it must have the will and the power not to regard even the wishes of the people, whom it ought only to know through their representatives—the will and the power to disregard even the voice of their representatives, while the tempest of revolt rages—the will and the power suddenly to crush every attempt at outbreak, and at all hazards of

the most severe military execution, not wantonly courting the occasion, but not feebly shunning the necessity of the lamentable infliction which his duty to the people requires that he should sternly exact.

Aye, and his duty to the misguided populace themselves demands that he shall not falter or trifle. It is humanity, it is not cruelty, which dictates vigour and promptitude in quelling insurrection. The misery is that no time can be allowed in such a crisis for singling out ringleaders in order to spare their less guilty dupes. But nothing can less deserve the praise of humanity than the silly half-measures which would make a Government parley with an armed rabble. Who has ever seen any thing but extended massacre follow from such a course, and from firing over their heads? And what worse fate can befall the mob than suffering them for a while to get the upper hand? Look to the scenes at Paris in February, and again in June! See the dregs of the populace for a season triumphant over the police and the law! See them revelling in the plunder of Neuilly and of Surenne—Neuilly, whence a Prince had been driven too merciful to keep a crown at the cost of the people's blood—Surenne, whence its generous owner had just sent the gifts of his noble charity to solace the wounded of the mob! Then see the fruits of their victory in the dilapidated mansion, where the assailants fought together like tigers for fragments of the blood-stained spoil, driven from the half

burnt chambers to the cellar, there to glut themselves with strong drinks, and strew the floor with their carcases ; some drowned in the rum of which they had stove the casks in their beastly appetite for intoxication, that would brook no delay ; many more burnt to death in the flames, which in their drunken fury they had kindled ! Nor do I conceive that much gain will be found on the balance of this sad account, by reverting to those other scenes of mob triumph, in which, according to many accounts of the Revolution, the victims were rather the soldiers and the National Guards than the populace themselves. I refer to the Chateau d'Eau, near the Palais Royal, where not a few were said to have been cast into the flames and burnt alive, while the people, " so sublime in the hour of victory," (said their parasites of the press and the tribune), accompanied the roasting of their fellow creatures with screams of delight and grins of rapture, borrowed from the hyena. The mob of Messina, however, outstripped even this ; for there is no doubt whatever that sixty Neapolitans were roasted and devoured by those infernal furies, those worse than barbarous cannibals, to aid whom in their revolt the Ultra-Republican Statesmen of Paris call for a force from the able and gallant leader of the Government, requiring that by making war upon the Neapolitan King, the savages of Sicily shall, on rising from their execrable repast, be enabled to lay the foundations of a new constitution.

The inhumanity, the cruelty of prompt measures to prevent such scenes as these, forms no object of my Christian dislike. Nor can my faith, or my charity towards offending brethren, be seduced into the benevolence of permitting such acts of popular valour and patriotism. I know the morbid feeling of humanity which prevails in these times, and against which both of us have had to struggle in the cause of that great and amiable virtue, the real humanity whose name the impostor usurps. I know full well that while one set of men would, under pretence of providing for the poor out of the labourer's pocket as well as his employer's, make all workmen idle paupers, and sweep all masters away; and while another class, to relieve the working people from hard toil, which they are willing to undergo, would deprive their employers of the means of paying their wages; and a third set of philanthropists would rescue all children from the protection of the parental feelings, for the sake of which protection Nature, or rather the Divine Author of Nature, has created the very relation of parent and child; and a fourth class, seeking the same end by more summary means, would abolish all property by dealing it out to be scrambled for by the multitude, thus erecting one vast Bedlam over the land for this half year, to be replaced by as vast a charnel-house the next—I say while these freaks are playing by men who call themselves compassionate, another class, dealers in the same cheap and worthless article of mock-hu-

manity, or seized with the disease, (I care not whether you treat them as traders or as patients) but uttering the cries of their paroxysm, or wishing to display their tinsel wares, warn us against shedding human blood on any account whatever, and having abolished in France all capital punishment for the very crimes which most justly deserve it, would also have us spare the mob in its revolt—adopting the principle that no soldier should ever act against his fellow-citizens, the rabble, in protection of his aristocratic oppressors, the people. Nay, among ourselves, there is the amiable if not very consistent or very straightforward Society of Friends, my esteemed fellow-labourers for so many long years in the cause of true humanity, who now hold it sinful to use any force in putting down that infernal traffic which, with their help, I nearly forty years ago carried a law to punish as felony—their doctrine being that we should let Africa be desolated for some five or six centuries, while it is slowly civilizing, and America almost as slowly emancipating the negroes. But my belief really is that if one or two of that amiable sect were at the head of affairs in any country, more blood would be shed than ever military despot dreamt of causing to flow; and the hapless people thereof would be speedily invaded and conquered after having for a short season undergone all the ills of pillage, massacre, and fire. So if our friends of the ultra Free Trade persuasion were to be humoured in their fancy that

by imbibing their doctrines, all men are becoming virtuous, and especially all governments peaceful, and some fifteen or eighteen millions were struck off our revenue, while the army was disbanding to lower the wages of labour, and the navy breaking up to be sold for old stores, the certainty is apparent to all but these lay preachers, that we should forthwith taste the sweets, not perhaps of cheap commodities, but of rebellion, civil war, revolution at home, and of eventual subjugation by such of our neighbours as had not yet become converts to the true faith.

As neither you nor I profess this creed, having been brought up in the heresies of another church, and being too old, I fear, to quit it, I must again declare my entire conviction that no government, at least in Europe, deserves the name, which has not an Executive provided with a force, as well of military as of police, sufficient to render all struggle against it, undertaken by revolvers, whether speculative doctors or practical banditti, utterly hopeless. The humanity, the real humanity, of this prudent plan is that by prevention it renders the extreme remedy of repression unnecessary. The rulers thus armed are so strong that wicked men, whether calling themselves Communists, or Anarchists, or Red Jacobins, whether thirsting for blood or for plunder, will not dare to move, and the tranquillity of the State will be maintained because all will perceive that the contest with rulers so prepared

is desperate, rulers whose strength is so manifest that they need not put it forth—*Possunt quia posse videntur*.

I have incidentally alluded to the flattery of the mob. Nothing, perhaps, in the late deplorable Revolution was more fitted to excite disgust, hardly even that novel feature, the abomination of boys and children from school taking a forward part in civil broils—a part not always discountenanced by their leaders, one of whom incurred the just displeasure of his chief under the old Government, by his most unbecoming attempt to involve in political broils those he was employed to instruct. But the Press certainly exceeded the ordinary measure of its unreflecting zeal, or at least implicit, prudent submission (to give it no harder appellation), in the fawning position which it assumed towards the authors of the convulsion as soon as the tumult had subsided, and the victory over order was declared. No common terms were found adequate to express the profound admiration of those organs, (reflectors in part) of public opinion, for the noble conduct of the populace. That many-headed idol—that Juggernaut was spoken of with an habitual reverence approaching to devotion. Before it all comment lay prostrate. The name was pronounced, and these worshippers fled from all discussion as sacrilege or impiety. The newspapers vied with the Provisional Chiefs in the warmth of the language used to exalt the object of adoration. Both those



self-constituted powers meekly bowed the head, and devoutly chanted praises of—"the sublime people," "the people as grand in victory, as undaunted in fight," which, indeed, was pretty exactly true, since there had been no fight to be undaunted in, and so no victory to be grand in—the "immortal days"—"the heroes of February"—the French noblest of human kind, the Parisians noblest of French kind, the mob noblest of any kind—this, and more than this, was I doomed to read in a remote and peaceful corner of the Republic, and this I should have taken for the ridiculous effusion of honest folly, had it not chanced that I saw one or two private letters of parties whose language in public was such as I have described. These letters, far from abounding in devotional phrases, betokened pretty clearly that the writers had in secret broken the images of the gods they worshipped in public; for one of them, I remember, expecting a massacre, indicated the precise number, not a small one, of the insurgent friends of anarchy and bloodshed that must bite the dust to satisfy the friends of order. His family had been nearly ruined by the sublimities and the magnanimities of the godlike Parisians.

It is true that all this fawning was of short duration. The Paris journals, and their allies elsewhere, certainly in England, probably in Germany, have long since ceased to sing forth their matins and vespers, and their Sabbath chaunts, in honour of the Paris heroes and demi-gods; nay, the

fit of worship having passed away, the devotees become Iconoclast, were minded to break their idol, and found it mere brittle ware, plaster of Paris. Nor has the devotional fit recurred ; nay, it is likely enough that passing, as is their wont, from one extreme to another, they are less than just to those towards whom they had so lately been more than generous. But this is not at all peculiar to the late occasion and its paroxysms. It is the common course, perhaps unavoidably, of the Tribune and the Newspaper press, which seem in one respect, if in none other, to resemble the rays of light, that they have what natural philosophers have termed fits of easy reflexion, alternating with fits of easy transmission ; they only reflect by starts, and by starts transmit their impressions, without any reflexion at all.

But let it not be for a moment imagined that this lessens the evil which such ephemeral, hasty, variable, discussion is calculated to produce, unless it be conducted, as happily it often is, (I speak of the Press) by men fit for holding so great a trust, and unless the Government of the country exercise a due control over its pernicious abuse. On the contrary, this uncertainty of purpose, this changeful nature, this veering about with every event of the hour, or every shifting of the popular gale, or the caprice of party leaders, is precisely that infirmity which renders it a fickle instrument for its friends to handle, and a dangerous neigh-

bour to all besides. For it is on the uninformed and irritable multitude that the Press works, and to keep its hold over that multitude, it must even yield in part to their dictates, going two steps with them in order that they may take three with it; pandering to their more violent propensities; joining in their most cherished delusions; rarely reclaiming them from pleasing error by inculcating unpalatable truths; outstripping them in obsequious flattery to the tyrant of the day, or virulent abuse of him whom on the morrow they reject; and thus exasperating what the general good would require to be mitigated or quelled; and perhaps on some sudden turn of fortune, upon any petty interest of itself or its party, damping or extinguishing the feeling that should be cherished and kept alive. Then, as this is an organ of public opinion, its voice may often impress with awe those public men who look to the people's favour. I well remember, and so doubtless do you, when for some years one could trace in many men's votes, especially in the Commons' House, the dread they felt of Cobbett; when the speeches and actions of several could be easily ascribed to the desire of being held up to admiration for months by that able writer, as persevering and thoughtless a praiser as he was a vituperator. But though no portion of the Press ever exercised so much influence as his paper, all of it has its effect upon public men, independently of the great ability shewn in conducting it, and chiefly

being supposed to speak the public opinion. That it influences both representatives and constituents in a dangerous degree during troublous times, the French Assembly appear to have discovered—a majority of nearly two to one having decreed the other day that for the present all the Paris papers should be placed under the absolute control of the Military Dictator. Nor as a friend to the “Liberty of Unlicenced Printing” can I blame this vote; for assuredly it is far better to suspend any important popular right at a season of public danger, the duration of which must be the measure of the suspension’s continuance, than to introduce permanent restraint upon freedom as a part of the ordinary constitution, a constant infraction of its principles. Indeed, the more any temporary law runs counter to the known spirit of the constitution, the less likely it is to find a place and take root in the system.

No doubt the Supreme Dictator’s friends felt serious jealousy of this other supreme power; they liked not a brother so near his throne. They saw no reason why the people should respect an anonymous tyrant, when a known chief was beginning to be disrelished. They felt that the double concealment which shrouds this obscure despot by no means makes him either more respectable or less formidable. They imagined to themselves an absolute power, self-created, domineering over the State and

the laws ; eluding every attempt to grasp it ; shunning the light, but launching its poisoned arrows from behind the screen of fictitious names ; adding to the wanton caprice of the Sultan or the Dey, the yet more fierce vengeance, and more uncertain waywardness of the mob, the many-headed tyrant ; and escaping the only risk which Sultans and Deys run of falling a sacrifice to individual resentment, because offering no visible mark at which the injured can aim their blow. Such feelings seem to have pervaded the National Assembly ; and the result has been a total suspension for the present of all the liberty which the Press can enjoy. Far less violence to the multitude from the legitimate soldiery, far less encroachment on the rights of journalists and their readers by the Royal Ordinances, roused the Parisians to cast off their Sovereign and his servants in 1830. But the blood which was spilt in 1848, and the suspension of all discussion, were the work of men acting in the people's name, and no one ventured to ask if indeed it was all for the people's sake.

But is the Press to be left entirely free, during peaceable times, in a town like Paris, or even Vienna, which has had its mobs, with the boys from school taking part, that most hateful incident of the late French Revolution, for from this stain the catastrophe of 1789 was free ? In such towns as these is the Press to be left without control other than the

feeble, slowly operating check of prosecution for seditious libel, which limps after the mischief as effectually as does a lame man after a lion? Let us for a moment, before inquiring how this influence may be modified by the peculiar circumstances of a Republic, pause to consider in what way the daily and weekly opinions of the Paris Journals are formed, and how their promulgation among all classes operates.

The inexorable necessities of printing at a given time a discussion of every question that arises, must have one inevitable consequence: Opinion on most things must be very hastily, very lightly formed. I am assuming perfect honesty and fairness, as well as undeniable abilities; I am supposing that nothing is printed which is not believed; an ample concession, you will admit, though possibly a just one. An event happens, a sudden change, for example, in the policy of some public department, or something is unexpectedly done by a minister or a party chief. There is no delay, no time for reflexion, none for inquiry as to the facts, on which all may depend. The next morning the opinion formed in a few minutes over night, is printed and dealt out among 400,000 readers, the number who are supposed to read the Constitutional, that paper having 60,000 subscribers. Or it may be that the intelligence being received in the day, the judgment is drawn up and delivered out in the Evening papers. True,

there may be a reconsideration, and it may lead to an alteration of the first opinion. But then, while men are men, the dislike of confessing a gross mistake will make the Journalist very slow to declare this truth, and especially when the credit of his paper is at stake, which governs its sale and his gains. So nothing but some event occurring which plainly denounces his blunder, will compel him to retract; even then he will do this in a mighty imperfect and ambiguous manner; he will be all the more ready to preach the same doctrine—the wholly refuted, half abandoned doctrine—at the next opportunity; and if it be the merits of a man, called a public character, on which false judgment had been passed, be sure that man will pay dearly during half his after life, for having been the innocent—the injured—cause of the paper's offence. Better had it been for that man if he had never—I wont say, been born—but been in the right—better he had been in the wrong, and “our correctness,” “our credit,” no doubt too, “our circulation,” had never suffered.

But I have been dwelling only upon honest errors, or, if not very honest, yet not very inexcusable, slowness to confess them. What shall be said of wilful falsehoods, propagated either of men or measures, in support of party manœuvres and party spite? What of undertaking to write up a bad cause, or write down a formidable opponent of a dishonest

cause? What of circulating direct incitements to revolution, to mob violence, to the invasion of private property, to making a run upon the Bank, to plunderers, to incendiaries? When our Government most properly put Cobbett on his trial for encouraging such crimes by his homely but powerful pen, the jury, under the influence of hope to win weekly praise or fear of encountering weekly abuse, refused to convict, and no verdict was returned. He became more cautious, not one whit less mischievous, in his writings; and had he been found guilty and sentenced, he would ever after have been more rancorous than before, though more cunning, as I have a right to affirm from my recollection of the course which he pursued when prosecuted to conviction in 1810 by Sir Vicary Gibbs.

It is impossible to deny the great and often sudden effect produced by such writings, thus disseminated from day to day, and repeating every day the lecture, or argument, or statement, or gibe of the day before. It is in vain to say that if this paper takes one line, another takes the opposite, and so the truth is elicited (to use a favourite phrase, which bids fair to supplant the old expression *drawn forth*.) It would be so did the same readers peruse both papers, or it would be so at any rate, in the long run, and no considerable duration could be given to falsehood or false doctrine. But we are not speaking of the propagation of a philosophic system, which by free controversy must be purged of error.



We are speaking of the daily operation of ephemeral productions—of their influence on the conduct of men at public meetings or in parliamentary chambers; and no doubt they must often mischievously affect both the multitude and the legislature. For to say that the bad doctrine preached daily by one journal is answered by its adversary, is really nothing to the purpose as regards immediate action. Men are apt to consult only the oracle at whose shrine they bow, in whose responses they place their trust; and far from being warned against the sybil by her violent paroxysm or her enigmatic language, the mysteries which she delivers out in the first person plural command respect, even engender awe, while her contortions have a contagious effect that no inspiration could reach.

I have already said that the influence of these writers and their readers is in some sort mutual; so it is with all party chiefs, whether known or concealed. They must follow that they may lead. Observe the Irish priest, as well as the Irish rebel editor. They must both in a great degree take their tone from those they rule; but they pitch it higher or lower to suit their own views—generally higher by a good deal than the cry of their flocks. Nor do I really think that this makes them less dangerous; I am even sure that it makes them the most unsafe guides in all critical times, and of these merely we are speaking. For though the opinion of the community at large is likely to be right in the long run, certainly it may be, and often is, most

erroneous for a season, and during that season the multitude is its own worst adviser. But it is during that same season that those leaders I am speaking of, by falling in with the prevailing delusion, and pandering to the popular appetite, greatly increase the violence of the mob feeling, and then it is during the same season that violent measures are planned and commotions excited. How very different would have been the conduct of the Parisians last spring, had a few days been allowed for reflexion! How few of the Irish rebels would have taken part in the outrages for which they are now awaiting their trial, had the fierce declamations against order, the gross falsehoods as to their force, the vile slanders on the loyalty of the troops and the police, which filled the columns of the press, been circulated long enough to be refuted before the revolt broke out! Distant places are the surest prey of such literary machinations, and it is quite possible for the Communist journals of Paris, or the rebel prints of Dublin, or the most profligate of all the coiners of falsehood, the insurgent press of Milan, to create an actual rebellion in some remote part of the country by the clumsy contrivance not unfrequently resorted to, of giving a wholly fabulous account of some rising in the capital, and the total defeat of the troops. America, still further off, is in many places at this moment the dupe of a story that the Irish rebellion, which had been put down by a few policemen, was entirely successful, the army defeated, the Government overthrown ;

and the delusion so impudently circulated, is now raising money to fill the insurgent treasury. Men much nearer the scene of its fabrication might have been enticed by such falsehoods to rise, and blood might have been shed as well as money or rent gathered.

It is another common answer to the argument I am using, to maintain that if there be no misgovernment, the invectives of the press will not persuade men of it ; that if they do not themselves feel they are suffering under oppression, the being told of their sufferings will not persuade them they are aggrieved. But, alas ! it is so much the lot of men in every country to have some considerable grievance, at least some ill to complain of, that there can never be wanting materials for the seditious agitator to weave his web withal, whether in the press, or at the public meeting, or at the altar. It is far more in exaggerating their existing grievances, far more in embittering feelings which already exist than in creating them, that he works. Then we are to remember that the suffering may be perfectly real, and the agitator may give a perfectly false account of its origin, even if he should not exaggerate its amount. Who ever denied that there has been great misgovernment in Ireland, and that much suffering has afflicted the people ? But those who for the most sordid purposes at one time, from personal vanity of the meanest kind at another, have well nigh driven that very excitable and not very reflecting people to revolt, ascribed all that was en-

dured to pretty nearly the only measure of unmixed good ever granted them, the Union with England,—a measure, without which, beside the aggravation of whatever want now presses on the inhabitants, and the exacerbation of whatever pains they suffer, they would have had to endure the frightful extremity of civil war, indeed of lawless anarchy, possibly of foreign conquest.

Assuredly, the more we consider this subject in its connexion with the French Government, the more embarrassing it appears. I can at present perceive no indications of any plan formed to resolve the difficulty. All that we yet know is the wise determination taken, and with a pretty general concurrence of parties, to uphold the power of the Executive Government, and to maintain the complete subjugation of the press, at least for a time. But I can descry nothing like an opinion formed in any respectable quarter touching the manner in which this subject is to be dealt with, after the State of Siege is at an end. To an end that State of Siege must come; and they who hourly tremble at the recollection of the past, will naturally dread the Press as likely again to fan the flames of discontent into the explosion of rebellion. For they well know that, very cheap sedition being daily preached to some twenty thousand half-famished workmen, who have for their ready made coadjutors at any moment as many more liberated felons from the gaols and galleys, the State can only be safe by vesting absolute power in its rulers; and should that power not reach the

preacher of revolt except through the slow process of trial and conviction, what security is there for the public peace, even if a force exists sufficient to restore it when broken? But the attempt at revolt is ever hurtful, even when triumphantly defeated; and a succession of rebellions subdued is only a degree less intolerable than one which succeeds, and involves the country in confusion.

I do not attach much importance to the consideration that a democratic government, deriving its power from the people, and ruling with their authority, in their name, has little to fear from what Cromwell called *paper-shot*. He had no experience in his day of an engine which would have destroyed him within a month after his walk from Westminster to his lodgings in Whitehall, with the key in his pocket of the House from which he had just expelled the Commons. It is certain that the importance of the Press is much less considerable when it has its rival in representatives freely chosen to speak the sense of the people, than when there being no legitimate expression of public opinion, the newspapers assume to speak in the popular name. This argument I always urged in favour of our great Reform, and against the abuse and usurpation of the Press. But I confess that I overrated the operation of the principle; and after the experience of the last few years, I can by no means doubt that much too great power for immediate purposes, and over men both out of Parliament and within its walls, is still

possessed by anonymous writers; while I freely admit that it is a power rarely abused by those who so ably and respectably conduct our principal English journals. The present question, however, relates to France and Germany far more than to England; and I can with difficulty figure to myself the possibility of governing the French people (by which I must generally be understood to mean Paris), whatever force is placed at the Executive's disposal, if unbridled licence be given to address the passions, including desire of food, of forty thousand men, a large proportion of whom are starving, and to be pitied while they are restrained—the rest half desperate, and to be coerced—all armed, and all prone greedily to receive whatever may be addressed to them. I have heard upon the authority of persons who were actually engaged in the late revolts, that not fewer than fifty thousand took a part in those crimes, and of these certainly not more than a fifth part have been seized and punished, or disarmed.

We are wholly ignorant of what opinions any party either in the Assembly or the country entertain on this important but difficult subject, and have not even any reason to suppose that it has yet been seriously considered by men administering affairs from day to day—living politically from hand to mouth—and too happy if, beyond expectation, a week passes without an outbreak. Should you, then, ask me what course ought to be pursued, as the pressure must ere long be felt of coming to

some settlement, I can only say that two remedies for the acknowledged evil present themselves to my mind, differing much in degrees of strength, no doubt, but of which the more powerful may be used when the weaker has failed, as we sometimes begin by taking henbane as a sedative, and afterwards find we must fall back upon laudanum. Should not our Libel-law be so framed as to discourage anonymous writing, and give every inducement to publish in each writer's own name? Thus it might be allowed to give the truth in evidence upon a prosecution, but only after the Court should have been satisfied by proof that the real author was before it, and not a man of straw. So a much more severe punishment might be inflicted on him who lent his name or his journal to another whom he screened in his slander or sedition, than on the real author. But I am aware that this, or indeed any prosecution, would prove ineffectual in troublous times. The Marats and Heberts were not slow to avow their execrable, their murderous doctrines in their own persons; and our Irish rebels have polluted the press in their own names.—Then might not the Executive Government have the power of suspending, for a time to be limited, any journal once convicted of sedition before a court of competent jurisdiction, the Court itself having authority in the case of private slander to give the like judgment, beside the punishment of fine and imprisonment? Some such provision would really

be desirable. Nor would the Press have any right to complain; because nothing can be more reasonable than to forbid the use of this great engine to those who have abused its powers, for the purpose either of sedition or defamation—as we forbid the use of the sea to the pirate who has polluted the great highway of nations.

I have spoken of the Executive and of the Legislative powers, of the Government and the Assembly. But it remains to make mention of the master evil, in the condition of our neighbours, to which all the others may be distinctly and directly traced. The predominance of Paris—the submission of France—this it is which both encourages the ill-disposed of all descriptions, whether those whom ambition leads away, or those whom speculation has debauched, or those whom lust of plunder pushes on, or those whom party spirit fills with designs against the stability of the government, it may be against the peace of the world. Were the gaining possession of the Chambers, and the Hotel de Ville, and the Invalides, of no more decisive importance in a civil contention than the securing in London, of Westminster Hall, and the Horse Guards; were it certainly known that unless the bulk of the provinces favoured the outbreak, no permanent change could be effected, and that within eight and forty hours, the troops, which had for the moment recoiled, would bound back upon the capital, joined by the National Guards and the garrisons of the neighbouring departments, to be further reinforced in two days more



from the Rhone, and the Loire, and the northern coast—the inducement would not be held out which now tempts to such outrages; them that are given to change; and such outrages would not be attempted as we have lately seen sometimes fail, sometimes succeed. But that inducement is almost irresistible, when the evil-minded know that they and the mob, ever at the insurgent leader's command, have only to master Paris, and then all France is theirs. Thus it is when a revolt against the established Monarchy is in contemplation; and thus it also is when a Republic is to be overthrown, and a despotism erected on its ruins.

Look at the history of the first Revolution, and you will see that the whole efforts of the chiefs, who followed each other in rapid succession, were directed to gain possession of Paris. They little troubled themselves about the provinces; unless, indeed, when Lyons grew discontented, and their Proconsuls were sent to batter it down, exterminate its inhabitants for resisting the Convention, and inflict upon it a new name as a memorial of its treason. In Paris the battle was always fought; now by the mob overturning the Monarchy, there being few republicans in France—now by the Convention defeating the mob, defending its despotic power, and continuing its sanguinary reign—sometimes by the Directory surrounding the Chambers with artillery, capturing part of the people's representatives, and sending them in cages through the submissive provinces before the face of

their constituents to the ports of embarkation for the swamps of Guiana—then by the Military Usurper dismissing both Directory and Chambers, that he might destroy the tyrant Republic and play the tyrant himself. All these operations were contrived with reference to Paris, confined to Paris, regarded as only affecting Paris; and no other part of France was either assailed, or defended, or consulted, or listened to, or even thought of, unless it might be now and then to execute a little Republican, or Consular, or Imperial vengeance on any town that ventured to break the deep silence of the grave in which all France, quietly if not contentedly, slept. But never, in all the history of the country and its revolutions, was this predominance of Paris so complete as it has been since February. Never was the whole of the people so entirely subjected to the inhabitants of the capital, who in their turn were subjected to a handful of their own fellow-citizens. And I hope I shall stand excused from the charge of hard-heartedness if I express my regret that the revolt of June was not continued a little while longer in order that the good disposition which had manifested itself in the provinces, no more to bear the yoke of the capital, might have produced its most precious effect, the hastening of National Guards towards Paris from other towns to overpower the evil-minded and encourage the faint-hearted, and shew that proud city that Lyons and Nantes, Dijon and Rouen, and Lisle, as well as Bordeaux and Marseilles, must no longer be tram-

pled on like slaves, or be forgotten like things that never had any existence.

It is no doubt true that the whole country being represented, according to a right of voting which gives every man a voice, the desire of the provinces, as well as the capital, will be made known, and in quiet and settled times, must prevail. But we are now speaking of times the reverse of quiet and settled. We are considering the chances of revolution by a rising of the people, not the course of ordinary government by their deputies. We are canvassing the probability of the machine that has been constructed being allowed to work, the security it has against being broken to pieces by violence, the prospect there is of the deputies from all France being suffered to exercise their right of voting, and the likelihood of their firmly resisting attempts to involve all in confusion. In this view the form of the Government goes for little; the votes of the deputies for less: because the Assembly, however composed, sits in Paris, surrounded by the populace of that overgrown capital; and its deliberations will inevitably be guided by the fear of hourly impending violence, may be almost governed by the power of the adjoining multitudes. Even when they have the firmness to resist any entire change which the mob may dictate in the public councils, they will go far in concession and compromise to avoid extremities which would endanger the peace of Paris, and might deliver it over to pillage. The superior

sway of the capital and its populace over the Ministers, and their being compellable to forget their constituents under its pressure, was pretty significantly hinted to them by the famous circulars from the late Minister of the Interior's office. He plainly told the electors in the provinces, that if they sent deputies to Paris who differed with the ultra-Republicans of that capital, the populace would rise against them, and overthrow the Assembly so chosen. M. Ledru-Rollin's appointment of Commissaries to agitate the Departments, and exercise dictatorial powers is another proof how entirely he relied on the mob of the capital as an instrument of Government.\*

But it is not the Government alone, not even the national representation alone, that feels the power of the populace, in whose perilous vicinity they act. That is a substantial force, directly exercised—a force applied to control immediately. There is a less direct influence, but a very powerful one, exercised by the same Parisian people over the whole of France, and the respectable portion of that capital are under the more immediate influence of the meaner portion, the mere populace. The sway of Paris over all France is almost unbounded; but it is not unaccountable. The French are a people peculiarly susceptible of national sentiments and sympathies. The ideas of glory, of splendour, of whatever dazzles the mind, find a ready access to

\* One of his Commissioners had been a felon, condemned to the galleys, and had undergone the punishment.

their imagination, and easily fill their whole souls. But all these things belong to the nation at large, to the ideal being, called France; and as France, adored by the French. Then Paris is the concentration of all that lustre; Paris is as it were France personified; and every Frenchman is vain of Paris. The vocabulary of admiration is exhausted in phrases to express its varied merits, its rich gifts, its countless charms, all the ideas of the most refined social enjoyments, the most brilliant festivals, the most exquisite gratifications of sense, the most delightful recreations of taste—all are inseparably connected with the capital, and to the capital every admiring smile, as well as each longing glance, points from a thousand towns, as well as a thousand vales. The having been or the not having been at Paris forms a distinction of rank in all provincial society; the once seeing Paris before they taste of death is the hope that through life lingers in all men's bosoms. I well recollect being with Madame de Stäel, then in the closest alliance with the powers that were invading France. She had accompanied one of their missions to London. She was discussing the chances of the campaign, when our friend, Lord Dudley, in his manner, said he expected to hear that the Cossacks had reached Paris, and nailed a horse-shoe on the door of the Tuilleries. I shall never forget the electric effect which this imagery produced on the true French feeling that found a vent in her exclamation of horror at the bare idea of such catastrophe. “*Quoi !*

*Cette belle France!—Et Paris!*" But *cette belle France* had long been entered by the Allies ; and it was hostile, tyrannical, persecuting Paris, under which she had suffered so severely—where, indeed, she never was liked, or even relished—it was Paris in the hands of her barbarian protectors that gave her a pang, which all the sufferings of France had failed to make her feel.

But such are the French. The pride of country, that patriotic feeling which ever mantles in the heart most accessible to personal vanity, adds its steady influence ; and the not harmless exaggerations of national enthusiasm pronounce Paris the metropolis of the civilized world. For all this there is so much solid foundation, and foreigners have so generally adopted the French, that is, the Parisian, modes in graver matters as well as in trifles, that we can perfectly comprehend, and partly forgive these fancies, as only realities exaggerated in the outline, and adorned in the colouring. But I am now only speaking of the fact, and the fact easily explains the prodigious influence exercised by the capital over the provinces ; the disposition to take the law from the banks of the Seine as far as the Channel, even the Pyrenees, and the Var ; the tenderness with which the atrocities of Paris are overlooked or excused, like the wayward tricks of a child by maternal fondness, or veiled as by filial piety hiding a parent's shame. The voice of opposition is still, when Paris has issued the com-

mand; and that command resounds over the length and breadth of the land. This is the real secret of French Revolutions; in some respects of the first Revolution as well as of the last; for although all France bore a part in the earliest stages of that great event, and took a deep interest in the proceedings of the Assembly, under the reign of the Convention the law was dictated from Paris. This too is the meaning of Danton's important saying, so many years ago, "You've got a Republic, 'tis true; but you have no Republicans." He could not doubt that there were many in Paris; he meant to say, and he said truly, that they formed a very inconsiderable minority in France; but then he well knew that Paris was all in all. I repeated the same *dictum* last April, from my place in Parliament, on returning from the scene of the recent Revolution, and I can take upon me to affirm that even before the change had plunged France in its present wretchedness, while as yet the lamentable experience of its fruits had not commended their bitter flavour to men's lips, without any view to their noxious quality, without any calculating of the price paid, as a mere matter of opinion and of feeling, the tree of liberty was the object universally of popular dislike. But then the parties for and against it were very differently circumstanced, and animated with feelings very unlike, else had it assuredly been hewn down, and cast into the fire. No two adversaries could be worse matched, for the few

Republicans would cherish the tree, nay, water it with their blood, while they who abhorred it did so speculatively, and told you they were against the Republic if you asked them, but would not walk across the street to see the hated plant destroyed. Paris, evil-minded, was up and stirring ; the country, well-disposed, was passive and abject.

The gloomy prospect which opens to our view from this ascendancy of Paris, and from the bad feeling that prevails among the multitudes within its walls, has, I rejoice to think, been somewhat enlightened by the gleam of hope which broke through the dark horizon when the provinces shewed their determination to resist the thralldom of the capital. When next the distresses of the country, pressing most severely upon Paris, and the folly of the agitators in pursuit of their sinister objects, shall cause scenes like those of May and June, we may confidently trust that any difficulty in restoring tranquillity will be followed by the march of the departments to aid the friends of order in the capital. Nothing else can rescue France from the disgrace under which she now lies, of a great nation suffering itself to be enslaved by a paltry but desperate mob in one of its towns.—There seems no hope of the real remedy being applied, the removing the seat of government to Dijon, or Orleans, or Tours.

I have hitherto said less of the foreign than of the domestic relations of the Revolution. But I must own that I think its aspect towards neighbouring nations is in the extreme alarming. Of



conquest I have no fear. My opinion, and I believe your own, has ever been, since the great settlement of 1815, that whichever of the two parties, the Allies or France, first crossed the Rhine, that party was doomed to defeat, possibly to entire subjection. Was it France?—Then the victorious coalition of former times would at once be reconstructed with all the popular support that could be derived from the memory of past aggression, from extinguishable hatred of the devastating hordes that followed Napoleon first to victory, then to disaster. Was it the Allies?—Then all the national spirit which that conqueror and his conscription, and ultimately his failure, had laid, would be revived, and the tide of invasion rolled back. But the successful defence, I conceive, would in neither case be the end of the war; and as invaded France would extend her dominions at her enemy's cost, so invaded Germany would never leave her adversary the power of again disturbing the world by her restless ambition, her warlike fondness, as silly as it is criminal, for national glory.

It is very true that the French people may feel differently towards their Republican and their Monarchical rulers; but I retain the same opinion now which I had before the change. I have no fear whatever of the French armies again making the tour of the European capitals. But I do not disguise from you my apprehension that the peace may be broken, and this alarm is grounded on the state of public feeling in Paris. Nay, I even fear

that on this important subject the feeling in the capital may more readily find an echo in the country than on most others. The French will conquer no more ; they are more likely to be subdued ; such a risk they will assuredly run if they go to war. Yet I feel far from certain that they will allow their rivals to remain at peace. This danger threatens from several quarters ; it is quite fit that instead of shutting our eyes to it, we should calmly but fearlessly examine it.

My alarm, then, arises from the constant reference to the affairs of foreign states, mixed up with all the proceedings at Paris since the 24th of last February. I wish to speak of the Provisional Government with all tenderness. No men ever had a more arduous duty cast upon them than that which they discharged with great success, in so far as the preservation of order was concerned. They suddenly became Dictators in a crisis of unexampled peril ; and it was at any moment not merely possible, but likely that all Paris should be wrapt in a whirlwind of slaughter and rapine. They shewed great courage in meeting the exigency of their position, eminently perilous to themselves individually as well as to their country. They boldly confronted those dangers ; M. Lamartine, among others, exposed himself fearlessly to destruction on more than one occasion ; and the great name of Arago is surrounded with new honours from the firmness as well as humanity which in every emergency he displayed. That they shewed little genius in the measures which they

devised is true ; but men holding power by so frail a tenure, without even the shadow of a title, either from election, or succession, or forcible usurpation, men in high place by mere accident, and whom any new chance might any hour remove, especially as they were without any military force whatever to support them, men so circumstanced could not be expected to carry through, could hardly have time to devise measures of general importance. Their two great objects which swallowed up all others, were to preserve order in the state, and to preserve their own official existence—to keep peace, and to keep place. Hence all their proceedings were, as might have been foreseen, directed to these two ends ; their administrative acts to prevent insurrection—their legislative edicts to retain the people's favour. Some, indeed, of the latter could not well be called provisional, as the abolishing of Colonial Slavery, an ordinance which, when sent forth, was irrevocable ; and the abolishing of Capital Punishment for political crimes, a measure which, though perhaps necessary to allay the apprehensions of 1793 and 4, haunting men's minds, was yet of most doubtful policy as a general law. Their incredible decree making all judges hold office during pleasure, and by popular election, was their worst act of internal administration ; it placed the administration of justice in the hands of the populace.

All their proceedings, however, may be viewed with more or less favour or at least leniency, save one. They held out the hand of fellowship to the insur-

gents of all nations. It is in vain that M. Lamartine, in the able defence by which he so triumphantly refutes the vile slanders against his personal honour, and shews demonstrably that his hands are clean, attempts to gloss over this the most pernicious act of his short administration. He does not, and he cannot deny, that he assured the people of all other countries of assistance from France, in case they should fail to work out by force their own emancipation; in other words, he promised that France would help all insurgents, who might be defeated by their lawful rulers, in their rebellion against established authority. M. Ledru Rollin, whom no one would have thought of coupling with M. Lamartine but for the leave to that effect which their strange coalition has given, went greatly beyond his respectable colleague, and actually fitted out a kind of expedition, half-tumultuary half predatory, to stir up insurrection in Belgium. Its total and immediate discomfiture has covered its author with ridicule, without exempting him from the reprobation of all good and just men. The government which M. Lamartine represented in giving this pledge, and which M. Ledru Rollin betrayed in making this buccaneer attack, has passed away. It was succeeded by another which has likewise yielded to the common fate of Revolutionary Rule, paying the debt of tumultuary nature. But if the recollection of the piracy has been by universal sense of shame sought to be obliterated, the memory of the ill-omened pledge survives them that gave it,

and the people call upon the Dictator of the hour to redeem it as one given on the part of France. It is cited, for instance, in all discussions on the important and delicate subject of the Italian Mediation.

Beyond all question this is the very worst thing that France has done, the most sinning against all principle, the most hurtful to herself, and to the world. I speak of it as one and the same act, proceeding from one and the same source with the famous decree of the Convention, November 19, 1792; which extended over all Europe the miseries of war. Then as now, the notion prevailed in Paris, I hope and trust, with much more acceptance in France then than now, that as the interests and the security of the Republic required the formation of other Republics in the surrounding countries, it was their duty to help all insurgents against Monarchical government. And no doubt if in 1792 the Republicans could spread their principles throughout Europe without losing by the war, they had that interest in the Decree which their rulers pretended. But there is this essential difference between 1792 and 1848, that the former was a period of National Bankruptcy, and the finances could hardly be in a worse plight from any war expenditure; whereas though the present financial embarrassments are very great, nothing like Bankruptcy has yet come upon them; and moreover a war was necessary to secure the mastery for one of the conflicting factions which were tearing the country in pieces, and rending asunder every tie of society, as well as all the bonds

of government—necessary, perhaps, to prevent a counter-revolution. And execrable as was the Convention's whole conduct, never let it be forgotten, that when it issued the Decree in question, and afterwards when it plundered the country by its paper money, it had the excuse of war having been already declared against France, and the French territory actually invaded by the Allied armies.

In the present instance the Provisional Government had no such pretext to plead for following the Convention's bad example. There was no attack from without, no counter-revolution at home ; and it cannot be doubted that the measure was dictated altogether by the desire of gaining favour with the worst, the most ignorant, and unreflecting, but also the most active and loud-spoken of the Paris multitude—the wranglers in coffee-houses and clubs, the politicians of the Boulevards, and the agitators of the press. These thoughtless men, filled with lofty notions of National glory, fond of exalting the French name in foreign countries, eager for the propagation of Republican principles, had taken up the notion that other Governments ought to be subverted because their own was changed, and that the people of other countries were longing for Revolution. They found in the Provisional Government a willing patron of their opinions. If not, it would be far better for M. Lamartine to avow frankly that he had, against his better judgment, sacrificed a great principle to the love of a rhetorical flourish, and had unwittingly exposed his country to

the greatest of hazards, when he merely thought of captivating the readers of his manifesto with the phrases of an eloquent cosmopolite.

As for the author of the Belgian incursion, he now openly avows that the Republic is gone unless it not merely imitates the Convention in its *propaganda* measures, but also in providing unlimited supplies of funds for a war by the issue of millions, nay milliards, of assignats. This person seems wholly ignorant of the necessary effects of such a proceeding both upon public and private credit; therefore he may not be chargeable with the design of enabling every one who owes a thousand pounds to pay his debt with a hundred. If he is aware of this, and any one owes him money, he is among the most generous of men; if he owes money himself, he is one of the most dishonest. I must suppose that he owes nothing and that nothing is owing to him. In that case he has to bear the blame of openly and deliberately advising the ruin of his country, and its ruin by the Government's fraudulent but wholesale spoliation. But amidst her ruin many an agitator will largely gain. All good Republicans who owe money, and I charitably assume the author of the plan not to be among the number, will be at once free from their burthens. All dissipated, profligate men will for a while revel in the enjoyments of fortune; and no doubt the having caused so blessed a change will attach to the conspirator against his country all who have nothing but their worthless

lives to lose. *Quicumque alienum æs grande conflaverat, quo flagitium aut facinus redimeret; omnes quos flagitium, egestas, conscius animus exagitabat, hi Catilinæ proximi et familiares erant.* That great agitator's system of finance too was the same. "*Tunc Catilina polliceri TABULAS NOVAS; proscriptionem locupletium, magistratus, sacerdotia,\* rapinas et alia omnia quæ bellum atque libido victorum fert.*" Yes! — the whole proceeding smells more of blood than even of rapine; and the object is openly avowed of a plan which should destroy all credit under pretext of relieving commercial distress, drive specie from the circulation in the hope of making money plentiful, wipe out as with a sponge all debts public and private, placing every one's whole fortune in the power of the Government by stealth, without the risk of resistance to taxation. This revolting scheme of finance has for its declared purpose the furnishing the sinews of war, the arming the Republic with means of invading Austria and Belgium, when not a sword has been drawn against it, nor a menace launched, nor one word used other than the language of kindness and courtesy!

Now, I am unwilling to detain you with the affairs of Austria in Italy, upon which I lately addressed the Lords, and I believe with a very general accept-

\* "Then Catiline promised them the sponge to wipe out all debts, the proscription of all moneyed men, offices in church and state, plunder, all that civil war offers to the license of victory."  
—(*Sal. Cat. Con.*)



ance of the opinions which I took leave to declare. But having protested against the propagandist doctrines of the Republic, as openly avowed now as by the Convention, though without the same excuse, I must once more lift up my voice against that new speculation in the rights of independent States, the security of neighbouring governments, and indeed the happiness of all nations, which is somewhat the mode among political reasoners of our day, in other places as well as Paris ; I allude to what is termed *Nationality*, adopted as a kind of rule for the distribution of dominion. It seems to be the notion preached by the Paris School of the Law of Nations and their foreign disciples, that one state has a right to attack another, provided upon statistically or ethnologically examining the classes and races of its subjects these are found to vary. Those sages of the International Law do not, like their predecessor Robespierre (of whom they compose panegyrics), hold exactly that France may legally assail any Sovereign who refuses to abdicate and bestow upon his people the blessings of Republican anarchy. But they hold that if any Sovereign has two dominions inhabited by different races, France has a right to assist either in casting off his authority. She may intimate to him that he can only continue to rule over the people who are his countrymen, or if he was born in neither territory, that he must be put to his election, and choose which he will give up, but cannot be suffered to keep both. Thus

Robespierre decided that our King had no right to retain his sovereignty over the Britons, among whom, it was his boast on his accession, that he had been born. The successors of the Red Republican stop short of that point ; but they hold it to be quite clear that our Gracious Queen cannot continue to rule over Ireland, peopled as it is with Celts and Romanists. As for the slight qualification annexed to this *dictum*, that France is only to interfere as an auxiliary, nothing can be more flimsy ; for if any party in any state declare its discontent, she is to be the sole judge of the sufficiency of the call made upon her, and she has a *mission*, what we should term a vocation, to hasten and help the discontented, in case their force should appear insufficient to change the dynasty.

I have put the case of England and Ireland in order to bring the matter home to ourselves ; it is by way of illustration, but exaggeration there is none. The Paris professors of Foreign Policy and International Law have exactly the same right to succour the Irish rebels that they have to assist the Milanese. And I must add, that I see no kind of difference that Charles Albert's invading Lombardy makes in the case, nor any kind of right that France has, or that we have, to attack Austria in order to protect his Sardinian Majesty, the breaker of the peace, the violator of treaties, and to obtain for him by force better terms than negotiation can secure. He was the aggressor. In a period of profound peace he

went to war with his unoffending neighbour, aiding that neighbour's rebellious subjects in order to obtain for himself a share of that neighbour's dominions. He was signally defeated ; and that surely is a sorry reason why we should compel the injured party that repulsed him in his aggression, to give the aggressor compensation for the damage he brought upon himself. I well remember the time when you and I, in concert with our friends Holland, Romilly, Whitbread, made constant attacks on the Government of Lord Liverpool for giving over, by Lord Castlereagh's negotiations, the Republic of Genoa to the Sardinian Crown. I really should like to know why we are all of a sudden to become enamoured of that Monarchy, merely because its chief has made war on our old ally, and not content with Genoa obtained by treaty, has endeavoured by violence to obtain Lombardy too. I cannot for a moment suppose that you can be a party to such proceedings, or can suffer England to engage with France in preaching the sacred rights of insurrection, the unheard of doctrine that any revolt in one country gives its neighbours a title to interfere in behalf, not of the lawful Government, but of the criminal insurgent. It is only as a matter of policy that the question can ever arise in your mind ; only by negotiation can you think of interposing at all ; only of the expediency or impolicy of a new distribution, but a voluntary and peaceable distribution, of dominion, can you permit any discussion.

But then with a view to mere considerations of policy, I must protest altogether against this new-fangled principle of Nationality, as a ground of making, or of desiring to see made, any new political arrangement, or of attempting any new trimming of the Balance of Power. I can understand the old maxims of Foreign Policy; the high expediency, independent of its justice, of a sacred regard to the faith of treaties; the duty of always watching the aggressions of other States, in order to prevent any one from gaining strength at the expense of the rest, to the danger of his making still further encroachments. These are the ancient and recognised principles by which, if we continue to guide our intercourse with foreign powers, we shall avoid all offence, promote our own interests, and serve the common cause of national independence. But the very corner-stone of this old received system, the very foundation of the whole doctrine concerning the Balance of Power, is to take for granted, as the ground of all our combinations and all our proceedings, the existing distribution of empire, the last general arrangement of treaty—to require that all parties should abide by it—to join all those who maintain, against any who by aggression or by intrigue would violate it. This is that famous system, parent of national liberty, ally of justice, source of peace, that venerable system, to maintain which our immortal deliverer from slavery and superstition devoted his glorious life; and preparing the restraint and the punishment of the ambitious tyrant who would have

subverted it, laid, by his wise and virtuous policy, the foundation of the victories by which in the next reign the grand object of the illustrious patriot was attained, after he had been removed to his eternal repose among the spirits of the just. Gracious God of Peace! what would William III. have said had he lived to see a new chapter added by revolutionary violence, and visionary speculation, to his sacred Institute of International Law; an ominous exception introduced into the great rule that the existing state of dominion, the actual distribution of power must be maintained—the foul exception that the arrangement may be disturbed as often the subjects of any state rebel against their lawful prince, or lawful republican rulers—against his own authority in Ireland, confirmed by the fight on the Boyne, or against his own commonwealth in Holland, or against his Imperial ally in Germany—an exception arming any ambitious neighbour with the right to help the insurgent, and strip the ruler of his crown, or to destroy the confederacy of the United Provinces, partition their territories, and erect a despotism over their people!

If any thing were wanting to convince me of the wildness, the utter folly, of all this new-fangled doctrine, as well as of the danger with which it is fraught to the peace of the world, it would be that its apostles, the handful of Paris agitators in clubs and journals, whom we are asked to aid in giving their visions practical effect, shew such deplorable ignorance of all the facts connected with the cases which they

handle of national diversity or connexion. Thus they fancy all Italians to be one and the same people, whereas Italy is known to be a geographical and not a political, or even an ethnological term. They suppose the Austrian possession of Lombardy to be a usurpation of recent date, whereas it has existed under treaty and under acquiescence upwards of three centuries. They deem nothing easier than to unite all the Peninsula in one body under one government, believing that all Italian States are panting to give each other the fraternal embrace, and be formed into one harmonious political mass. Why, at no time in ancient or in modern history was ever Italy one, or Italians united, or on a friendly footing each tribe with other, or inclined to any mutual relations but those of war. Lombardy has belonged twice as many years to the House of Austria as Great Britain to that of Brunswick. The Sardinian King is a French Prince of the House of Savoy, while the Emperor is an Italian prince, grandson of the Tuscan Duke; and the Piedmontese and Savoyards are as much foreigners in the Milanese as the Austrians themselves.

I pass over the attempt upon Belgium where not only no internal difference of race could be pretended, but the Flemish race was to be absorbed in the Gallic, solely in order that the French dominion might once more be stretched to the Rhine. On the Polish agitation, however, I must say one word, for the sake of peace, and for Poland's own

sake. Few English statesmen have more constantly befriended the Polish cause than myself, or more uniformly denounced, both through the press and in Parliament, the atrocious crime by which that unhappy country was seized and partitioned. But I must not refuse my assent to the principle that a great lapse of time may forbid us to scrutinize the origin of titles, and that unless we would see the world involved in perpetual war, we must sometimes consent to throw a veil over the past. Since the first Partition, between seventy and eighty years have elapsed, and three generations of men have passed away. Even the last of the three spoliations dates above half a century ago. For the patriotic spirit of the Poles I have all admiration; for their excesses I can make every allowance. Yet I cannot wholly admit the wisdom of at least the greater part of these exiles, while not a few of their number take up the trade of agitation in whatever country affords them shelter. It is certainly not for the excellent constitution of 1791, or for the liberties of their countrymen in any way, or for the bulk of the people at all, that they and their zealous advocates shew the least regard. The restoration of Poland—the revival of a separate and independent state, no matter how ill-governed, were it even under an Algerine despotism or a Venetian aristocracy, less bad indeed by a good deal than the old Polish Elective Monarchy, or periodical anarchy—this it is that these misguided men sigh for—

and this it is for which they really hold, that all free states are bound to make war. In short it is for a word, a name—Poland—that their whole efforts are engaged; and I observe, that if any absolute Prince or Autocrat will only call himself, beside his other titles, *King of Poland*, the feelings of the leading Poles are mightily softened towards him, while the commonalty hail his assumption of the name with shouts, as a deliverance and a restoration. At Paris, there is no doubt, that the cause of Poland was made the watchword of the detestable attack in May. As little doubtful is it that the views of the insurgents had been repeatedly declared since February to be the driving the government into war for Poland—that is, to certain defeat, in all probability followed by the invasion of France. I venture to hope that such proceedings, wholly unworthy the countrymen of the truly venerable patriot whom you and I have so long known, and so highly esteemed—him who has made such prodigious sacrifices to his love of Poland, Prince Czartoryski—will not be persevered in by any of the Poles. They may rely upon it that it tends as little to conciliate the goodwill of statesmen, as to retain the benevolence of individuals, in the different places where they have found an asylum.

But I must add a few words to shew how ignorant or how unreflecting are those who agitate in their behalf, and make Poland a stalking-horse in assailing the government of other countries, let me add,



the Balance of Europe. To hear them declaim on the wrongs of Austrian Poland, you would imagine that these men well understood the constitution and history of that dominion, upon their own principle of Nationality ; and also that they were authorized by the people to declare for an independent sovereignty in Gallicia. Nothing of the kind ; their want of knowledge and want of authority are about equal ; they have no knowledge, no powers ; they know nothing of the Gallicians, and have no commission to clamour for them. They suppose that all Gallicia, from Cracow to the Buckovine, is Polish, and its inhabitants all Poles. Now the fact is, that of the five millions one half are Rutheni, or Rustchaks, a people of Sclavonian race no doubt, like the Poles, but also like the Bohemians and the Russians themselves, yet wholly differing from those Poles in all the important particulars of language, spoken and written, religion, rites, manners, customs. They are part of the great Rustchak nation, which occupies South Russia, South-east Poland, and North Hungary, and reckons at least fifteen millions of souls. The Gallician portion of this great tribe was conquered by the Poles, and underwent all the oppression of Polish aristocracy, and the misery of Polish anarchy. They occupy twelve contiguous circles of Gallicia, while the other inhabitants intermixed are dispersed in all directions and belong to various nations, Germans, Jews, Wallachians, and Massurians, the only Poles, who inhabit

the western circles, being less dispersed than the other tribes last named. The Rustchaks are the aborigines of the country which was overrun by the Poles. Far from having the least desire to see the tyranny of their oppressors restored, there is nothing which they more devoutly pray for than that the Austrian dominion of order and peace may continue to put it down. Indeed I should not wonder if my friends of the Ethnological Society, widely differing from their Paris namesakes, and formed to protect the aborigines in our settlements, should interfere on behalf of those oppressed Rustchaks, were they threatened with the calamity of a Polish restoration ; though I know that those friends would not approve any more than I do of the violence which was used last year by the peasants against their landowners. All this is wholly unknown to the Parisian doctors of National and Insurgent law ; but I cite the Cracow revolt as a proof that these doctors are disavowed by their clients in Gallicia ; for the violence was perpetrated by the peasant against his Polish oppressor. The Pole wished to emancipate himself from Austria ; the Gallician, content with Austrian government, and dreading the emancipation, rose upon the Pole. I suspect the same may be said of the peasants in other parts of Poland ; I know that a like contempt for all matters of fact make the agitators of the Boulevards and the Press at Paris talk confidently of all Lombardy preferring the Sardinian to the Austrian rule, while the proofs are exactly the

other way ; since we know that within the last two months the peasantry, differing from the Milan insurgents and siding with Marshal Radetsky, afforded him ample supplies, while they refused all assistance to the invader, who excused his retreat behind the Mincio by stating his want of provisions.

But suppose it were all the other way ; that nothing could be more careful than the inquiries made by the Paris Propaganda to inform themselves before taking part against the Government of the neighbouring countries ; that nothing could exceed the unanimity of the people anxious for help to throw off the authority of their rulers,—I am still to learn by what possible title France is to set herself up as Liberator in Chief of all nations, as Auxiliary General of all insurgents, as a political Ishmael, whose hand is against every neighbour. Such a pretension is utterly intolerable to all nations. Its being allowed by others, would be mean beyond all meanness that calls down human contempt. Every nation that desires to preserve its own existence must resist it to the death. I will say more—I have not a doubt that it will be universally, and firmly, and effectually resisted as often as it is put forward.

Do I then apprehend that a state in such a condition as the Republic has been unhappily reduced to, will act so insane a part as thus to war with the world—that its bankrupt commerce, with failures at the rate of 20,000 a year in Paris alone, about

twenty times as many as in all England—that its labouring and embarrassed finances, with funds that have declined forty or fifty per cent., and a revenue falling off at nearly the same rate—will tempt its chiefs to increase all their other difficulties by the additional load of a general war? Certainly I should say that I could have no such fear were those rulers at freedom to take their own line; for nothing but madness could make them voluntarily rush into war. But I must ever bear in mind that we are speaking of a Republic—of an administration in the hands of six or seven hundred men chosen by universal suffrage; above all, of men sitting under the pressure of the multitude in Paris, which knows little, reasons less, feels much, and acts with all the passions of a mob. And then I must also recollect the state of public opinion, as it is termed, I should rather call it the feeling of the populace, in that capital as indicated by recent occurrences.

That feeling, I grieve to say it, in my eyes wears a warlike aspect. I at once give an instance:—A vacancy takes place for a Paris Deputy. Who is elected? Prince Louis Napoleon, the representative, the hereditary representative, of the Emperor whose name he bears—a name still encircled with a glory that French eyes are peculiarly fond to gaze upon, and singularly apt to be dazzled with. The Prince is, I believe, an amiable and worthy man; but if he has ever shewn that he possessed any capacity, I am wholly ignorant of the occasion of the display,

and I am certain that all France is in the dark as much as myself. He may have great prudence and discretion ; but if he has ever proved his possessing those qualities, so valuable in a party chief, I am sure it was neither when he made a hopeless attempt at Strasbourg and escaped to America ; or when he landed at Boulogne, with half a dozen followers, and, after being convicted, was lodged in gaol at Ham. He may have such sagacity and such tact as to avoid what French taste in conduct is so nice about, the ridiculous ; but unhappily if it be so, a great exception was made to his wonted course in his last exhibition, when he displayed painted eagles on pieces of stick, and let fly a live bird of that species as typifying his claim to the Imperial crown ! Now such is the man in the eyes of all Paris, and yet he is chosen by Paris—the stern feeling of Republicanism notwithstanding—and the fixed resolution of all ranks against hereditary succession notwithstanding—and the Paris love of personal lustre and renown notwithstanding—and the Parisian's dread of ridicule and abhorrence of being laughed at more than being hated notwithstanding. The Paris electors have placed this man at the head of the poll by a great majority, his competitors being known, and distinguished, and able, and popular men ; and all simply because he is, by hereditary succession, the Emperor Napoleon's representative, and bears the Emperor Napoleon's name. Can I doubt that this strange choice

is a tribute to the memory of the chief, the tyranny of whose reign, and the rigour of whose conscription, and the lavish cost of whose wars in blood and in treasure, are all effaced in the glory of his victories, which have made the tyrant fade from the memory that can only find a place for the conqueror? Is there any other explanation to be given of the phenomenon?

I set down this, therefore, to the account of the national love of war which prevails; and is not I fear me, like the love of revolutionary agitation confined within the circle of the capital. The plain truth is, that how disastrous soever war might prove to France, her people would fain have an opportunity of wiping out the memory of the merely accidental, and therefore unimportant, defeats which they sustained at the close of the last great contest. They would therefore much rather aid than oppose the Paris agitators in raising a war-cry; and thus it may be difficult for any Government, impossible for a feeble one, to make head against the pernicious tide of popular wickedness and folly, which is but too likely to set in against a long peace under a Republican Government. It required all the vigour, and all the address of the illustrious Prince whom the Revolution has set aside, to maintain the relations of peace with all his neighbours. That he felt, while he ruled, the pressure on him in an opposite direction, there can be no doubt. That the pressure was

somewhat aided by members of his own House I suppose no one can have forgotten.

If, however, I am asked whether or not Prince Louis Napoleon is likely to head the war party, or any party at all, or if having reached a first place he is likely to gratify the national taste for military operations, I must freely declare that I have no such belief. Indeed, he is no more likely to become a great warrior, than a great orator or a great statesman. His entrance into the Assembly will speedily settle his personal claims to the distinction which has befallen him. But I merely cite the fact of that distinction, in order to warn of their error those who deem the peace of Europe out of all hazard; and to warn of their far worse error those who seem so ready to interfere with the concerns of foreign states, when such interference must disturb the general tranquillity, and when that calm cannot be ruffled in any quarter without imminent hazard of some movement on the part of France.

The prospect of any war is indeed peculiarly alarming at this time, and I do sincerely believe that it ought to be more dismal to French than to English eyes. Hostilities commenced by France, and followed by an immediate coalition against her, must end in her discomfiture, and in measures of prevention being taken to deprive her of the power ever again to disturb the peace of the world. If only Paris, the cause of the mischief, were the sufferer, we might

lament it less ; but universal France would also be injured, and of Paris the good must suffer with the unprincipled men, for whose punishment, if it ended there, no pity could reasonably be felt. I willingly turn away my eyes from this contemplation, while I breathe a fervent prayer that the evil may yet be providentially averted.

It was my duty to point out one risk to which the Revolution has exposed Europe, and especially France, from the Republican councils bringing on a war. I cannot close this Letter without adverting to another danger which threatens France from domestic causes, and in her internal affairs. It is much to be feared that her continuance in the present unsettled state, the grievances and sufferings of the people under a system of perpetual change and constant uncertainty, the evils of repeated convulsions, attended with bloodshed as well as rapine, and the anarchy far worse than has hitherto been known, in which a single successful outbreak would plunge the country, may impress all men's minds with the dread of every change, of any movement which can by possibility lead to change, and impress them so deeply as to leave the community at the absolute mercy of whatever regular Government shall arise out of the ruins of public order. None can be stable that is not of a Monarchical complexion ; and I tremble for the liberties of France when her people shall once more be so subdued by the terror of change as to crouch willingly under any rulers, and bear



any system of quiet though absolute rule. This fearful spectacle has been already witnessed for fifteen years ; it was before our eyes from the fall of Robespierre to that of Napoleon ; it may again be seen to afflict every patriot Frenchman, every lover of freedom, every friend to human improvement.

To satisfy us how imminent is this peril, we need only cast our eyes back upon the history of France for the last sixty years. The horrors of the September massacres—the bloody despotism of the Reign of Terror, with its Revolutionary Tribunal, and its wholesale murder under colour of perverted law—the habitual domination of the Paris mob—the constantly renewed scenes of tumult and change which destroyed all sense of security, and made all domestic peace hopeless—these were the fruitful source of the miseries which so soon succeeded, and bowed down that great and noble people to the ground in wretchedness, amidst all the immortal triumphs of their arms. These passages in their story it was, that engendered the universal and unconquerable aversion to all resistance, and made every Frenchman willing, nay anxious, to obey whoever might rule, and to kiss the rod, were it of iron, wherewithal he was scourged, so the same rod might only prevent the return of Terror and Proscription. After Robespierre, and St. Just, and Billaud, and Collot, and Carrier, and with the recollection of those monsters fresh in all men's minds, there was nothing that any ruler might not attempt ;

and if he failed, it could not be from popular resistance. The Directory broke through their own Constitution, surrounded their Chambers with artillery, and dispatched the representatives of the people in cages, like wild beasts, to ship them for America.—The same rulers set no bounds to their speculation at home, and their incapacity turned victory into defeat abroad.—The Republic to which all men had sworn was overturned, and a military despotism set up in its stead.—The insane ambition of the tyrant exhausted the resources of the State, ground the face of the poor, and filled each family with mourning, that his lust of conquest might be satiated.—The myriads of his soldiers whitened the remote plains of Russia with their bones; and after all this cost of blood and treasure, France was overcome and overpowered, stripped of all her conquests, and occupied by foreign troops.—Yet all these enormous oppressions, all this vast misery, was tamely borne, and not a finger was raised, not a voice, not a whisper ever breathed, against the Government—because all men dreaded the worser tyranny of the Convention and the Clubs; they recollected that, and any thing was better than that. And be you assured that if the present Republic shall continue to exhaust France, and its course shall be stained with more blood, involved in more anarchy, the restoration of some regular Government will be attended with the renewed influence of the same feelings that enabled other rulers to

domineer, and men will be disposed to submit, because they will feel that any thing is better than 1848. The reason why above every thing I feel anxious that the present state of things should come to an end without further mischief, above all, more effusion of blood, and more ruin to private fortunes, is, because if such calamities should befall the country, they must dig deeper the grave of her freedom.

And here I close this address. It has extended itself far more than I could have desired ; and yet it shrinks into a very small space compared with that which the subject occupies in the eyes of all thinking men. But once more let me hope for attention while I urge upon the lovers of hasty, ill-matured measures, upon all that be given to change, whether abroad or among ourselves, and I speak of Germans and of Italians more than of any portion of our own countrymen, the dangers that beset their path.—I know full well that were I only to paint the perils, the extreme perils in which their love of revolution may involve the States they belong to, I should fail to gain their ears. They care but little how great is the risk of anarchy to which their schemes may expose their country ; and know not what fear is, when only the country is in jeopardy ; for nothing is more cheap, certainly nothing more worthless, than the vicarious courage so often observed to distinguish these agitators, whose bold designs, whose daring ambition is a common topic of praise with the

vulgar more unreflecting than themselves. I should therefore be but speaking in an unknown tongue were I to set before such persons the misery into which the Mob and the Clubs have, by their New Revolution, recently plunged a community, previously enjoying great happiness, with the certain means of increasing its prosperity as well as extending its liberties in every direction; or were I to contrast, for instance, the existing state of society in Paris with that in which it might have been securely flourishing, had the old Government continued, or had it only been gradually changed. But I would implore these agitators, whether at Milan or at Rome, at Berlin or at Vienna, to cast their eyes over the history of the former Revolution, and to say what remains of the men who bore in it the more forward parts. Of those whose exploits for a little season occupied the world—those whose power spurning all bounds, surpassed the power of the most absolute Monarchs—those whose appetite was pampered by every enjoyment the most exquisite, whether to the ambitious or the vain, sovereign sway seasoned, highly seasoned, with popular renown—of those men, the spoilt children of revolutionary factions, what now remains? The men who were in all men's mouths—who had for a season all the glory of demagogues, and all the sway of despots—nay, who filled foreign countries as well as their own, with the terror of their names—fell a sacrifice without a single exception to the ferocious power

they had called into existence; not one of them ruled for a year; and not one of their names can now be pronounced without horror or disgust, as awakening the recollection of monsters that disgraced human nature. Even Mirabeau is no exception; he is still known as a rhetorician; but he died before the Revolution was steeped in blood, and he had indeed quitted revolutionary courses before his profligate, though brilliant career, was brought to a close. If in any part of France you name any other of the Revolutionary chiefs, and venture in the company of respectable persons to call them great men, you will at once be met with the assertion that you have prostituted the name to those who now are only regarded as great miscreants. For myself I should except, certainly, General Carnot, from this sweeping censure—but it is as a warrior and a philosopher, not as a ruler; and men have refused to forgive, even on the ground of the dangers which foreign invasion had brought upon the country, his acquiescence in the wholesale murders that were perpetrated to secure the revolutionary reign.

Then if the lovers of Revolution turn their eyes towards the late events at Paris, has the power obtained by their authors, or the glory that surrounds their name, any charm whatever, either for those covetous of dominion, or those ambitious of renown? A stormy uncertain rule of three months; a sudden descent into their pristine obscurity; the oblivion which awaits them in whatever is connected with the

year 1848 ; this is the example which their history holds out to tempt others into the path trodden by them with neither a firm step, nor enduring applause, and leading to obscurity both of station and of fame. The memory of Arago will indeed survive, but it will be of the philosopher, not of the ruler ; and if any other name shall outlive the Provisional Government, it will be from having heretofore been, or hereafter being, inscribed elsewhere than on that ephemeral structure.

Surely, those agitators, who have ever felt inspired with the vain hope of reaching the heights of distinction and power by the short path which civil confusion throws open, instead of climbing the steep by the slow ascent which ambition must take in quiet times, must be startled when they see reflected in the dreadful page of French history the sure fate of revolutionary eminence. The young and ardent, so easily dazzled with the view of that glittering summit, are not unnaturally inclined to disdain the more tedious progress, and refuse to bridle their passions, by submitting to the conditions on which alone either glory, or power may be innocently enjoyed.

*Certare ingenio, contendere nobilitate,  
Noctes atque dies, niti præstante labore,  
Ad summas emergere opes, rerumque potiri.\**

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\* Of genius emulous to soar on high,  
With noble souls in noble arts to vie,  
On worthy toils to see suns set and rise—  
The strife is arduous—but the world's the prize.

But if the guiltiness of such impatience have no terrors for their imagination, let them reflect on the lessons its fatal consequences should draw from their recollection of other men's story. Which of all the Convention chiefs who domineered over their own country, and filled every other with horror of their names, would have entered on their wicked path, had he known that it led to a few months' reign, a stormy life speedily ended, and the perpetual execration of their memory through all after times!

In our own happy country there is no occasion to read such lessons to any respectable portion of the community. But there are some who really conceiving that abuses exist of a grievous kind, feel anxious to have them removed; and are impatient of the slow remedy brought by the spirit of peaceful, gradual improvement. Let these men, before they put themselves in the hands of the wily intriguer, or reckless abettor of sedition (possibly for his own vain or sordid purposes), reflect on the state of France since such guides acquired their influence, and were followed in their destructive courses. Can any reflecting mind fail to perceive that if the country has not been ruined by the late change, it is only because no great country can ever be wholly ruined; that the French have exchanged a high degree of prosperity for the most cruel misery which ever a once thriving people endured; and that far from gaining the amendment of their political institutions, which it was their professed object to accomplish by

the change, they in all likelihood have retarded the progress of permanent improvement, for the lives of the present generation. To the English reformers, this reflexion will of course present itself; and it will have its due weight. The Irish are so habituated to let any factious leaders, lay or clerical, think for them, that no one can much care for an opinion which is not their own; and to expect that reason should operate upon their crafty instructors would indeed be a vain imagination.

But it is not alone to the profligate adventurer, the broken down lawyer or bankrupt tradesman, the mere lover of mischief, the trafficking agitator, or the man of restless ambition, conscious of talents above his obscure station, that these observations are addressed. It is one of the most painful reflexions connected with Revolutionary times, and certainly is one of their most hateful effects, that in their perverting and corrupting operation they spare not persons of previously fair character. Nay, not always does the tempest sweep innocuous over the heads even of the more amiable members of the community which is visited with its devastation. A general disregard of tender feelings, even a contempt for them, is engendered—those feelings which are the source of many virtues, the guardians of many more. The hardness of heart extends its indurating influence to the nobler parts of the system, and the moral principles are attacked. A further mischief



is done by the constant working to which the imagination is stimulated. Then the excitement of the passions, even the more innocent ones of hope and fear alternating in excess, is far from harmless in its influence upon the character. But indeed a vast injury is occasioned merely by the calamitous changes perpetually succeeding one another ; by the sudden destruction of some fortunes, and as sudden creation of others ; by the misery every where spread over the land, and the terror daily haunting men's minds, of worse yet to come. All great national disasters, if they have any continuance, produce evil effects upon a people's morals ; for they tend to displace prudence, itself one of the virtues, and protector of them all. It is even not unfrequently seen that the good fall among the earliest victims to the moral plague, as those of robust constitutions are swept away first by natural pestilence. The reason is partly that, being of warm temperament and strong feelings, they are easily excited ; but still more because they have a dangerous confidence in themselves, and are betrayed ere they are aware of the risk they run, just as we not unfrequently remark persons of indifferent character trusting little to themselves, and less to their reputation in the world, more cautious to avoid certain temptations, and at any rate more fearful of losing what little rag of character remains to them.

Now let it not be supposed that I am dwelling

on this topic for the sake of mere sentiment or moralising. Little as I am disposed to undervalue such discourse, even with a view to the province of the statesman and the lawgiver, I have a much more practical inference to draw from these somewhat sad reflexions. They teach us the extreme folly, not unmixed with considerable national arrogance, of those amongst us who are so ready to affirm that there can be no fear of the scenes in the former and the late French Revolutions, at which we all stand aghast, ever being enacted in our happy country by our virtuous people. I feel inclined on this as on many occasions to address my countrymen, "Men of England, I observe that ye are in all things a little too Pharisaical." It is every day's experience, accordingly, on the subject of our present remarks, to hear good English folks thanking God they are not as other men are, bloody-minded and murderous; they have no fear of excesses being committed in London or Manchester, even were Revolution to approach; they are sure it would be very different here from what it was in Paris.

But a little month ago, and I doubt not the Germans would have held the like language of national self-complacency; and yet Frankfort has already overtaken, almost outstripped Paris; so rapid is the pace of mob progress under revolutionary tuition! For my own part, I have as good an opinion of my fellow countrymen as any one can reasonably have of a vast and various body of people. But as

I cannot answer for the conduct of any individual under the influence of disease, so neither will I undertake for the English multitude, if they shall happen to be infected with the fever which has mastered reason in other countries, or laid her asleep; and I deem it infinitely better on every account, that the experiment should never be tried which can alone decide with certainty between the opposite opinions.

For preventing that perilous experiment and its mischiefs, even if it proves successful in vindicating the superiority of the English character, there is one plain maxim, and in our day a very practical one. The trade of the agitator, the professional mischief maker, should in every possible way be discouraged. As long as every idle, good for little person can be assured that if he only devotes himself to stirring up the people on any ground, either as a canting preacher of grievances, or a quack distributor of remedies, he will both become a popular favourite and earn a subsistence, rely upon it there will never be wanting many to follow this very easy and not very honest calling, and many more to be the dupes of their nostrums. At no period was this abuse carried so far as during the last few years in England, but especially in Ireland. The Repeal of the Union has been a livelihood to many; to one it was the source of great gains. Partly on the money it yielded in large sums, partly on the traffic which he drove with your Government for places to his family and followers, in purchase of

their votes which he commanded, he contrived, during a considerable portion of his life, to live upon the people, as a pensioner on the poor, with the name of a disinterested patriot. It is true that he survived, or all but survived, his rent ; his tenantry fell away ; the priest, his steward, could no longer extract from the pauper cottier the pence they so hardly earned. Others less wary and crafty, but far more honest, and if highly improvident, yet not at all sordid, denounced the fraudulent traffic in principle, that had so long been shamelessly carried on ; and his successors, devoid as they were of all capacity, and though tools of the priesthood, yet blunt tools, have been, amidst the laughter of their countrymen, obliged to give up the family business. But this has not happened until paid agitation, the trade so long driven by them, had produced its baneful effects ; and the Government of the country, I say it with grief, and even with shame, is deeply responsible for having suffered it to be carried on so long and so largely, that you have now to suspend the constitution one day and prosecute for rebellion the next. See only the hazard of such courses ! Look at the late publication of Official Documents in France, and you will mark the folly of those who allow gunpowder to be collected near the fire, and think they can prevent mischief by begging it not to explode. The Ledru-Rollins allowed clubs and agitators to prepare the revolt, and then wished to stop their proceedings on the eve of its breaking out ; but

it was too late. A colleague of yours and a valued friend of mine pursued the same course with the agitator, whom he protected and even praised, who had once been offered a place on the Bench, and whose right to agitate for *Repeal* was affirmed to be like that of any man to discuss any question. But that agitation has led to rebellion, and it is too late to retrace your steps.

Then the disposition still exists among many to try the same artifices, which some, for want of ability, have given up; and who can affirm that they will fail? Who can have the least confidence in a people like the Irish, whom a long habit has made either quite incapable or quite unwilling to think for themselves? Who can be sure that new sedition-mongers may not again, by the course of agitation which you allow, prepare them for breaking the peace, by crimes which, when it is too late, you are compelled to punish? I have once and again demanded why no legislative measures are taken to prevent this grievous abuse. But my Irish friends (most of whom, however, seem ashamed of their gullible countrymen, and still more of the crafty leaders that prey on them) meet my complaint by referring me to the memorials and tributes gathered in England, the large levies of money to remunerate agitators on one question, and to find the funds for excitement on another. I can only reply that the cases cited in no manner of way answers my question; for I consider those abuses as, if not of the self-same

description, yet nearly as much to be reprobated, and as calling loudly for repression. The Whigs in 1796 (I think it was) moved Parliament to pass a resolution, against Mr. Pitt's raising money by voluntary contribution, to aid the expenses of the war, and especially to protect the institutions of the country. Yet the money thus raised and thus objected to by the adherents of your government, and by the family relatives of your colleagues, was to be expended by the Crown for the service of the State. What would you have said of a levy, equally without consent of Parliament, of money to be used for promoting a disruption of the Empire?

It has indeed been attempted in the desperate condition of the argument to defend these contributions, on the ground of the subscription raised for paying Mr. Fox's debts. Can any cases be more unlike? Those sums were cheerfully given by the personal friends of that illustrious man, who were richer than himself, not wrung from paupers by the pressure of the priest, or the wily activity of the agitator; they were given, too, with no view to retain the services, or secure the opinions of the party chief who was the object of the bounty, and upon whose conduct all well knew the proceeding could have no influence. It may be observed, however, that when a similar measure was proposed to Mr. Pitt on his retiring from office in circumstances of great embarrassment, he at once and peremptorily forbade it. The difference of those two great men's

conduct may have arisen from the different quarters whence the kindness severally proceeded; and no one has any right to blame the acceptance of the one, by invidiously contrasting it with the refusal of the other. Of this I am quite certain that the gathering of money for purposes of agitation, is any thing rather than justified by the consideration that they who profit by the levy are Members of Parliament. Nothing can border more closely upon corruption than such persons receiving payment from any quarter for the particular course, which, in their public capacity, they may pursue. Returned to represent the people, and to consult for the good of the realm, they are bound to obey the dictates of their conscience, and to have no other motive because no other guide. Whoever holds them entitled to receive any compensation for taking one course rather than another, must be prepared to acquit a judge, who, after deciding a cause, receives a present from the successful suitor. And yet if even all the suitors, successful and unsuccessful, were to join in shewing, by a gift of money, their gratitude for the quick dispatch of business, a merit in which all parties have the same interest, the Judge, who should presume to accept the gift, would surely be impeached.

But now, my old and excellent friend, let me not conclude without reverting to foreign affairs, and expressing my earnest hope that your colleagues will most deeply study the signs of the times; and beware above all things how, in so unsettled a state

of men's minds all over Europe, they commit the councils and the high authority of England to those wild speculations of which I have been speaking, chiefly in their relation to the policy of France. If, as many persons think, your Cabinet got entangled in the intricate maze of Italian affairs last summer, from an unfortunate disposition to outbid the French government in the market of popularity, they no doubt found that easy enough, because he can always bid the highest who is the least under the controul of sound discretion, and, thinking only of the prize he is resolved to purchase, never stops to count the cost. But then they have possibly also discovered that what is thus bought at the price of sound discretion or of sound principle, is both little worth having, and of so fleeting a nature that it cannot be long enjoyed. That the English government was very much more popular in Italy than the French, when I last went to the borders of that country a year ago, I am quite ready to admit ; I am sure there was no such superior favour accorded to us there, when I returned after Christmas ; and I am perfectly certain that we are any thing rather than popular now in any part of the Peninsula, either with the courts, the aristocracy, or the people. But thus it ever has been, and ever will be with all who run the race of concession to flatter popular passions. Whoever goes farthest, being least encumbered with honest principles and wise views, is sure to prevail until another



overtops him in the same unworthy contest ; and I little doubt that the Paris mob with their leaders, being beyond all others singularly fitted to engage in the struggle, have long since won the hearts of all the Italian agitators, from the Corso of Milan to the Faro of Messina. If it be true that your Government ever did enter upon this competition, I am sure you have long since relinquished it, not in despair that you could not succeed, but because you felt that it was a contest in which you scorned to prevail.

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When in these pages the exclusion of Magistrates from the Legislature is mentioned, reference is only had to a Representative Body or Chamber, and to the higher Magistrates, Procureur General, and Judges of the Cour de Cassation, Royale, d'Assize.

## POSTSCRIPT.

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THAT I might not encumber my letter with details, I have postponed a few particulars which have some importance, rather in illustration than in proof of my opinions or my statements.

Of the composition of the French Assembly I have an account (on the accuracy of which I can entirely rely), as far as regards 771 of its members; the remaining 129 I know nothing of, but as the divisions have not generally exceeded 750, and only once exceeded 800, if the number of 900 was completed at the general election, a great part of the 129 have never attended. Among the 771 were—lawyers, that is advocates and notaries, no less than 136; merchants, only 38; physicians, 33; functionaries, 104; journalists and men of letters, 41; judges and magistrates, 48; proprietors, 283; working men, 33; military men, 39; priests, 16;—so that of 771, there were 488, or above five-eighths, professional men and not proprietors, or five-ninths, even if we add the traders to the proprietors. The large number of 104 functionaries only comprehends administrative functionaries; the class of functionaries taken altogether comprehending professors, military men, ecclesiastics, and magistrates,

amounts to 221. Not fewer than 155 of the number above given were members of the old Chambers.

The numbers who voted at the elections were much smaller in the Departments than in Paris, and much smaller in all the late elections than at the general election in April. In the next Department to the one where I reside, not above 950 out of 8400 have voted at district elections.

The proofs of the Minister of the Interior having encouraged, it may be said fitted out, the Belgian inroad, are to be found in the Report of the Commission lately presented to the Assembly, Vol. ii. p. 17, 18.

Under that Minister's auspices, too, was formed the Club des Clubs, connecting all the Clubs, (and to which each sent three representatives); and that central Club sent, in connexion with the Minister, and at the public expense, missionary agitators into all the departments, in order to stir up the people, the authorities, and the army, in favour of the most republican candidates at the elections.—See Vol. ii. p. 79. The instructions of these delegate missionaries are given in the Report. One is to stir up soldiers against their officers, should these officers oppose the violent candidates. Another is to remind priests that our Saviour was “the greatest of all Republicans, the Divine promoter of Republicanism, and that the Christian doctrine is that of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity.”—Ib. p. 131. (The Republican Fraternity, however, being that of Cain with Abel.) The following

letter from one of these missionaries shews how well qualified they were for the task of enlightening the people. They are told to remind all preceptors that their enemy the University is exterminated, and borrowing the famous phrase of Voltaire, "C'est la Republique qui a *ecrasé l'infame*."—p. 131.

"Roubaix, le 4 Avril, 1848.

"SITOYON,

"Je couru toute la campagne aux sanviron de Roubaix le fermier son touse contan de la République, me lon na fai courire de bruit que plusieurs Representan du couvernement provisoire couvere de dete que cete poure sa que lon nave mi de sienpux si chere eque Ledieurolien (Ledru Rollin) nete pas lome qui faile, le souvrie tous di qu'ils vondre bien vote come je loredi me que le fabrican vou loit Done le billet poure qu'ils fodra vote, je lor sedi de faire un billet et de metre desu le nom que vous dire vous gardere ce lui de votre fabrican dans votre poche et vous metre le votre ce qui fai touse d'accore et vou sovere le pin de la misere, ils son touse di oui voilà come il fau faire vive la République, vive la France, et vive pari\* je fai un dise coure conservant le travail ils son a prové cete le fabrican lor avedi que come le couvernement voule faire cete in possible ranje le travale qui fale que sade meure come ce te auparavan.

"Le Sitoyon GARNIER."

In a letter dated April 14, from the same delegate, who is described as a workman of the Faubourg du Temple, and a member of the Club of Saint Maur, we read:—

"Je sui en rapore aveque le prefe de Liles a qui je fe memore et madone de sienstrusion que je suivi."

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\* This is very intelligible when decyphered; it is "*Vive Paris*"!

I may venture to hope that few of our humblest tradsmen, none of our well-educated artizans, nor indeed many of our bettermost peasantry and their day-labourers, would relish any change in our Government which should send down such utterly illiterate creatures to take part in elections. The powers conferred upon Commissioners (or Republican Proconsuls) by the same Minister, and not disavowed by any of his colleagues, though disapproved by many of them, were absolute.—“Your powers are unlimited. The agent of a Revolutionary authority, you too are Revolutionary.”—“You are clothed with the Sovereignty of the People; you are amenable only to your own conscience.”—(ib. 68.)

Afterwards, from the same department of the Provisional Government, proceeded the yet more abominable circulars threatening Paris and the representatives with a renewal of the barricades, and the deputies with a nullity of their elections, if they should prove too tame Republicans.

“There would then,” says M. Ledru-Rollin, “be but one course to take by the people which made the barricades; it would be again to manifest its will, and force the deliberations of a false national representation.”—(ib. 73.)

The number of clubs established since February was 147; the number of new daily papers set up 171. (ib. p. 103—280.)

The connexion of Polish agitation with the out-

break in May, and indeed with all the proceedings of the clubs and the agitations is clearly proved. (ii. 82. 113. 135. 225.)

Some of these misguided men even declare for an invasion of Europe on behalf of Poland, on the ground that it would be a good opportunity of having a war, and that a state of war was required for the benefit of the Republican cause!

Various indications of the terror inspired by the populace are to be found in these documents. None is more remarkable than the proclamation issued the evening that the mob had turned the Assembly out of doors. It only ventures to declare that, "Every authority which henceforth shall attempt to take the sovereignty out of the National Assembly's hands, shall be declared"—What? Treasonable? Rebellious? No, nor even criminal, but only "*factionous*." I believe such an avowal of mob worship through fear is unexampled. The Proclamation is dated 15th May, 5 p.m., and begins with stating that the Assembly has taken refuge in the Luxembourg, after being invaded and expelled its Chamber. (ib. 41.)

That Louis Blanc's projects were shared in by the Government is evident. They were deemed an important source of influence, perhaps necessary to preserve the Government's existence by appealing to the populace. Thus, on February 25, the morrow of the Revolution, we find this announcement:—

“ Le Gouvernement Provisoire de la Republique s’engage a garantir l’existence de l’ouvrier par le travail.

“ Il s’engage a garantir le travail a *tous les citoyens.*”

The decree then declares the right of workmen to form associations for enabling them to obtain their due share of profit from their labour. Next day the Government decrees the national workshops, and two days after it appoints Barbes—the notorious Barbes, now awaiting his trial—Governor of the Luxembourg Palace, where Louis Blanc and Albert, called ostentatiously and falsely, *ouvrier*, when he was a bankrupt manufacturer, were appointed to hold their sittings for the “*organisation de travail.*” (vol. ii. p. 138, 139.)

Of this Report there are three volumes, and all well worth reading, to explain the Insurrections, and also the Revolution itself. See especially vol. ii. p. 161, where the Minister of War declares that Ledru-Rollin ordered the muskets and ammunition, which were sent to the club of Sobrier, the well known insurgent leader, now in gaol for his rebellion. See also vol. i. p. 187, where the shoemaker Chente, begins one of his depositions thus : —“ I was one of the twelve who at the office of the “*Reforme Journal*, 24th Feb., after the taking of “ the Tuileries, *formed the Provisional Govern-* “ *ment*, at least the part of it which was to form it “ together with the other part left to the choice of

“ the *National Journal*.” Was ever Government in this world so formed ?

The peremptory opinion on Universal Suffrage expressed in the foregoing Letter, applies not to England so much as to countries unaccustomed to Elective Legislature. For I hold it to be very clear that we pitch our Franchise too high when we exclude the best and by far the most independent of all the lower orders, the Artizans. Without wishing to shew the least disrespect towards the middle classes, I am very sure that they are not more deserving, certainly are much less independent, than the good workmen. Indeed, I never saw any want of that quality so essential in a voter, independence, among any class of our working people, whether engaged in town or country labour. I feel confident, too, that with us the most extended suffrage never could produce such returns as have been made in Germany.

THE END.









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